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LETTERS TO THE CLERGY

GEORGE ALLEN
PUBLISHER
LONDON
156 CHARING CROSS ROAD
RUSKIN HOUSE

LETTERS TO THE CLERGY

ON

The Lord's Prayer and the Church

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D., D.C.L.

WITH REPLIES FROM CLERGY AND LAITY, AND AN EPILOGUE BY MR. RUSKIN

EDITED, WITH ESSAYS AND COMMENTS, BY THE

REV. F. A. MALLESON, M.A.
VICAR OF BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS

THIRD EDITION

WITH ADDITIONAL LETTERS BY MR. RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
1896

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press

INTRODUCTION

The first reading of the Letters to the Clerical Society to which they were first addressed in September 1879, twenty-three clergy being present, was prefaced with the following remarks :—

A few words by way of introduction will be absolutely necessary before I proceed to read Mr. Ruskin's letters. They originated simply in a proposal of mine, which met with so ready and willing a response, that it almost seemed like a simultaneous thought. They are addressed nominally to myself, as representing the body of clergy whose secretary I have the honour to be; they

are, in fact, therefore addressed to this Society primarily. But in the course of the next month or two they will also be read to two other Clerical Societies, — the Ormskirk and the Brighton (junior),—who have acceded to my proposals with much kindness, and in the first case have invited me of their own accord. I have undertaken, to the best of my ability, to arrange and set down the various expressions of opinion, which will be freely uttered. In so limited a time, many who may have much to say that would be really valuable will find no time to-day to deliver it. Of these brethren, I beg that they will do me the favour to express their views at their leisure, in writing. The original letters, the discussions, the letters which may be suggested, and a few comments of the Editor's, will be published in a volume which will appear,

I trust, in the beginning of the next year.

I will now, if you please, undertake the somewhat dangerous responsibility of avowing my own impressions of the letters I am about to read to you. I own that I believe I see in these papers the development of a principle of the deepest interest and importance,—namely, the application of the highest standard in the interpretation of the Gospel message *to* ourselves as clergymen, and *from* ourselves to our congregations. We have plenty elsewhere of doctrine and dogma, and undefinable shades of theological opinion. Let us turn at last to practical questions presented for our consideration by an eminent layman whose field of work lies quite as much in religion and ethics, as it does, reaching to so splendid an eminence, in Art. A man is wanted

to show to both clergy and laity something of the full force and meaning of Gospel teaching. Many there are, and I am of this number, whose cry is "*Exoriare aliquis.*"

I ask you, if possible, to do in an hour what I have been for the last two months trying to do, to divest myself of old forms of thought, to cast off self-indulgent views of our duty as ministers of religion, to lift ourselves out of those grooves in which we are apt to run so smoothly and so complacently, persuading ourselves that all is well just as it is, and to endeavour to strike into a sterner, harder path, beset with difficulties, but still the path of duty. These papers will demand a close, a patient, and in some places, a few will think, an indulgent consideration; but as a whole, the standard taken is, as I firmly believe, speaking only for myself, lofty

and Christian to the extent of an almost ideal perfection. If we do go forward straight in the direction which Mr. Ruskin points out, I know we shall come, sooner or later, to a chasm right across our path. Some of us, I hope, will undauntedly cross it. Let each judge for himself, *τῷ τέλει πίστιν φέρων.*

PREFACE

TO THE THIRD EDITION

HAVING been urged to bring out a new edition of the volume first edited by me in 1880, and having willingly accepted the invitation to do so, it will naturally be expected that I should give some account of the circumstances which have led me to take the somewhat unusual step of reviving a book which has for twelve years been lying in a state of suspended animation.

On the first conception of this volume I applied to Messrs. Strahan, to produce it before the reading and thinking world. I should have done more wisely, no

doubt, had I offered the publication to Mr. George Allen, Mr. Ruskin's well-known publisher. It avails not to explain why I chose a different course, of which subsequent events only too soon showed me the error; for after the first edition had been sold off in a week, and while the second was partly sold and partly in preparation, Messrs. Strahan's failure was announced, greatly to my surprise; my somewhat isolated position in the north country so far from London keeping me very imperfectly informed as to what was passing in the literary world.

Reasonable, business-like people would ask, why did I not make an effort to rescue my little barque out of the general wreckage, and why did I not, remembering that Mr. Ruskin had with much kindness freely bestowed the copyright on me, save the second edition

and arrange with another publisher to carry the work on? But I was failing at the time with the illness which was effectually cured only by a long sojourn amidst or very near to the ice and snow of the Alps. I was incapable of much exertion, and, in fact, did not much care. Besides which I am not a professed literary man, being chiefly interested in the work of my rural parish on the borders of the Lake District, and should not think it fair, or even possible, if I may use an equestrian metaphor, to attempt to ride two horses at once.

So Mr. Ruskin's letters, etc., as edited by the present writer, came to be entirely laid by, though not forgotten by the hosts of Mr. Ruskin's friends, followers, and admirers, who regretted the suspension of so valuable a work and so rich in great thoughts, teachings, and suggestions.

So things remained until August 1895, when a new friend, Mr. Smart, gave me the pleasure of a visit, and we talked over the circumstances just narrated. Passing over several very pleasant meetings in London, let it be sufficient to mention that under the impulse of Mr. George Allen's encouragement, and cheered by the valuable assistance and co-operation of another friend, Mr. T. J. Wise, I agreed to carry forward this Third Edition with the full approbation and consent of Mr. Ruskin himself, though it should be said that on account of the state of his health, I have been unable to consult him on any of the details of the publication.

But it will not be exactly the same volume. Mr. Allen and Mr. Wise, having gone over much of my correspondence with Mr. Ruskin, were good

enough to express a desire that some of those letters addressed to myself as a friend should be embodied in the present volume, as being strongly illustrative of his views on the subjects dealt with in his more formal Letters to the Clergy. I may claim pardon for a feeling of great satisfaction with the circumstance that in the course of so long and so delicate a correspondence as is contained in this volume, never has a cloud overshadowed our paths in this matter, never has a cold blast from the east sent a shiver through my system, nor, I presume, his. For had Mr. Ruskin felt any resentment at anything I wrote, with his usual downright frankness he would not have been backward for an hour in expressing in vehement language what he felt. But from first to last my intercourse with that kind and

eminently distinguished friend has been kept bright and happy by his unvarying serenity.

The Letters from Clergy and Laity in this Third Edition occupy much less space than in the original one. It was Mr. Ruskin's wish that they should be subjected to some process of abridgment; besides which the allowing of space for the new feature of additional Ruskin Letters made a curtailment in another direction necessary. The plan which seemed to me the least discourteous to my numerous correspondents of that time has been to make a selection of passages from a certain number of the Letters.

F. A. MALLESON.

THE VICARAGE,
BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS,
January 1896.

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MR. RUSKIN'S LETTERS

A

MR. RUSKIN'S LETTERS

I

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
20th June, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I could not at once answer your important letter: for, though I felt at once the impossibility of my venturing to address such an audience as you proposed, I am unwilling to fail in answering to any call relating to matters respecting which my feelings have been long in earnest, if in any wise it may be possible for me to be of service therein. My health —or want of it—now utterly forbids my engagement in any duty involving

excitement or acute intellectual effort; but I think, before the first Tuesday in August, I might be able to write one or two letters to yourself, referring to, and more or less completing, some passages already printed in Fors and elsewhere, which might, on your reading any portions you thought available, become matter of discussion during the meeting at some leisure time, after its own main purposes had been answered.

At all events, I will think over what I should like, and be able, to represent to such a meeting, and only beg you not to think me insensible of the honour done me by your wish, and of the gravity of the trust reposed in me.

Ever most faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

THE REV. F. A. MALLESON.

II

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
23rd June, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—Walking, and talking, are now alike impossible to me; * my strength is gone for both; nor do I believe talking on such matters to be of the least use except to promote, between sensible people, kindly feeling and knowledge of each other's personal characters. I have every trust in *your* kindness and truth; nor do I fear being myself misunderstood by you; what I may be able to put into written form, so as to admit of being laid before your friends in council, must be set down without any question of personal feeling—as simply as a mathematical question or demonstration.

* In answer to the proposal of discussing the subject during a mountain walk.

The first exact question which it seems to me such an assembly may be earnestly called upon by laymen to solve, is surely axiomatic: the definition of themselves as a body, and of their business as such.

Namely: as clergymen of the Church of England, do they consider themselves to be so called merely as the attached servants of a particular state? Do they, in their quality of guides, hold a position similar to that of the guides of Chamouni or Grindelwald, who being a numbered body of examined and trustworthy persons belonging to those several villages, have nevertheless no Chamounist or Grindelwaldist opinions on the subject of Alpine geography or glacier walking: but are prepared to put into practice a common and universal science of Locality and Athletics, founded on sure survey and successful

practice? Are the clergymen of the Ecclesia of England thus simply the attached and salaried guides of England and the English, in the way, known of all good men, that leadeth unto life?—or are they, on the contrary, a body of men holding, or in any legal manner required, or compelled to hold, opinions on the subject —say, of the height of the Celestial Mountains, the crevasses which go down quickest to the pit, and other cognate points of science, — differing from, or even contrary to, the tenets of the guides of the Church of France, the Church of Italy, and other Christian countries?

Is not this the first of all questions which a Clerical Council has to answer in open terms?

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

III

BRANTWOOD, *6th July*, 1879.

My first letter contained a Layman's plea for a clear answer to the question, "What is a clergyman of the Church of England?" Supposing the answer to this first to be, that the clergy of the Church of England are teachers, not of the Gospel to England, but of the Gospel to all nations; and not of the Gospel of Luther, nor of the Gospel of Augustine, but of the Gospel of Christ,—then the Layman's second question would be:

Can this Gospel of Christ be put into such plain words and short terms as that a plain man may understand it?—and, if so, would it not be, in a quite primal sense, desirable that it should be so, rather than left to be gathered out of Thirty-nine Articles,

written by no means in clear English, and referring, for further explanation of exactly the most important point in the whole tenor of their teaching,* to a "Homily of Justification,"† which is not generally in the possession, or even probably within the comprehension, of simple persons?

Ever faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

IV

BRANTWOOD, *8th July*, 1879.

I am so very glad that you approve of the letter plan, as it enables me to build up what I would fain try to say, of little stones, without lifting too much for my strength at once; and the sense of addressing a friend who understands

* Art. xi.

† Homily xi. of the Second Table.

me and sympathizes with me prevents my being brought to a stand by continual need for apology, or fear of giving offence.

But yet I do not quite see why you should feel my asking for a simple and comprehensible statement of the Christian Gospel as startling. Are you not bid to go into *all* the world and preach it to every creature? (I should myself think the clergyman most likely to do good who accepted the πάση τῇ κτίσει so literally as at least to sympathize with St. Francis' sermon to the birds, and to feel that feeding either sheep or fowls, or unmuzzling the ox, or keeping the wrens alive in the snow, would be received by their Heavenly Feeder as the *perfect* fulfilment of His "Feed My sheep" in the higher sense.)

That's all a parenthesis; for although

I should think that your good company would all agree that kindness to animals was a kind of preaching to them, and that hunting and vivisection were a kind of blasphemy to them, I want only to put the sterner question before your council, *how* this Gospel is to be preached either "παντα χοῦ" or to "πάντα τὰ ἔθνη," if first its preachers have not determined quite clearly what it *is?* And might not such definition, acceptable to the entire body of the Church of Christ, be arrived at by merely explaining, in their completeness and life, the terms of the Lord's Prayer—the first words taught to children all over the Christian world?

I will try to explain what I mean of its several articles, in following letters; and in answer to the question with which you close your last, I can only say that you are at perfect liberty

to use any, or all, or any parts of them, as you think good. Usually, when I am asked if letters of mine may be printed, I say: "Assuredly, provided only that you print them entire." But in your hands, I withdraw even this condition, and trust gladly to your judgment, remaining always

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

THE REV. F. A. MALLESON.

V

πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

Pater noster qui es in cælis.

BRANTWOOD, 10*th July*, 1879.

My meaning, in saying that the Lord's Prayer might be made a foundation of Gospel-teaching, was not that

it contained all that Christian ministers have to teach; but that it contains what all Christians are agreed upon as first to be taught; and that no good parish-working pastor in any district of the world but would be glad to take his part in making it clear and living to his congregation.

And the first clause of it, of course rightly explained, gives us the ground of what is surely a mighty part of the Gospel—its "first and great commandment," namely, that we have a Father whom we *can* love, and are required to love, and to desire to be with Him in Heaven, wherever that may be.

And to declare that we have such a loving Father, whose mercy is over *all* His works, and whose will and law is so lovely and lovable that it is sweeter than honey, and more precious than gold, to those who can "taste" and

"see" that the Lord is Good — this, surely, is a most pleasant and glorious good message and *spell* to bring to men—as distinguished from the evil message and accursed spell that Satan has brought to the nations of the world instead of it, that they have no Father, but only "a consuming fire" ready to devour them, unless they are delivered from its raging flame by some scheme of pardon for all, for which they are to be thankful, not to the Father, but to the Son.

Supposing this first article of the true Gospel agreed to, how would the blessing that closes the epistles of that Gospel become intelligible and living, instead of dark and dead: "The grace of Christ, and the *love* of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,"—the most *tender* word being that used of the Father!

VI

ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου.

Sanctificetur nomen tuum.

BRANTWOOD, 12*th July*, 1879.

I wonder how many, even of those who honestly and attentively join in our Church services, attach any distinct idea to the second clause of the Lord's Prayer—the *first petition* of it—the first thing that they are ordered by Christ to seek of their Father?

Am I unjust in thinking that most of them have little more notion on the matter than that God has forbidden "bad language," and wishes them to pray that everybody may be respectful to Him?

Is it any otherwise with the Third Commandment? Do not most look on it merely in the light of the statute on

swearing? and read the words "will not hold him guiltless" merely as a passionless intimation that however carelessly a man may let out a round oath, there really *is* something wrong in it?

On the other hand, can anything be more tremendous than the words themselves—double-negatived:

"οὐ γὰρ μὴ καθαρίσῃ . . . κύριος"?

For *other* sins there is washing;—for this—none! the seventh verse (Exod. xx.), in the Septuagint, marking the real power rather than the English, which (I suppose) is literal to the Hebrew.

To my layman's mind, of practical needs in the present state of the Church, nothing is so immediate as that of explaining to the congregation the meaning of being gathered in His name, and having Him in the midst

of them; as, on the other hand, of being gathered in blasphemy of His name, and having the devil in the midst of them—presiding over the prayers which have become an abomination.

For the entire body of the texts in the Gospel against hypocrisy are one and all nothing but the expansion of the threatening that closes the Third Commandment. For as "the name whereby He shall be called is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,"—so the taking that name in vain is the sum of "the deceivableness of *un*righteousness in them that perish."

Without dwelling on the possibility —which I do not myself, however, for a moment doubt—of an honest clergyman's being able actually to prevent the entrance among his congregation of persons leading openly wicked lives, could any subject be more vital to the

purposes of your meetings than the difference between the present and the probable state of the Christian Church which would result, were it more the effort of zealous parish priests, instead of getting wicked *poor* people to *come* to church, to get wicked rich ones to stay out of it?

Lest, in any discussion of such question, it might be, as it too often is, alleged that "the Lord looketh upon the heart," etc., let me be permitted to say — with as much positiveness as may express my deepest conviction — that, while indeed it is the Lord's business to look upon the heart, it is the pastor's to look upon the hands and the lips; and that the foulest oaths of the thief and the street-walker are, in the ears of God, sinless as the hawk's cry, or the gnat's murmur, compared to the responses, in the Church service, on the

lips of the usurer and the adulterer, who have destroyed, not their own souls only, but those of the outcast ones whom they have made their victims.

It is for the meeting of Clergymen themselves—not for a layman addressing them—to ask further, how much the name of God may be taken in vain, and profaned instead of hallowed—*in* the pulpit, as well as under it.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

VII

ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου

Adveniat regnum tuum.

BRANTWOOD, 14*th July*, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—Sincere thanks for both your letters and the proofs sent. Your comment and conducting

link, when needed, will be of the greatest help and value, I am well assured, suggesting what you know will be the probable feeling of your hearers, and the point that will come into question.

Yes, certainly, that "His" in the fourth line * was meant to imply that eternal presence of Christ; as in another passage,† referring to the Creation,

* In a proof sheet of a book of the Editor's at that time in the press.

† Referring to the closing sentence of the third paragraph of the fifth letter, which *seemed* to express what I felt could not be Mr. Ruskin's full meaning, I pointed out to him the following sentence in "Modern Painters:"—

"When, in the desert, Jesus was girding Himself for the work of life, angels of life came and ministered unto Him; now, in the fair world, when He is girding Himself for the work of death, the ministrants came to Him from the grave; but from the grave conquered. One from the tomb under Abarim, which *His* own hand had sealed long ago; the other from the rest which He had entered without seeing corruption."

On this I made a remark somewhat to the following

"when His right hand strewed the snow on Lebanon, and smoothed the slopes of Calvary;" but in so far as we dwell on that truth, "Hast thou seen *Me*, Philip, and not the Father?" *

effect: that I felt sure Mr. Ruskin regarded the loving work of the Father and of the Son as *equal* in the forgiveness of sins and redemption of mankind; that what is done by the Father is in reality done also by the Son; and that it is by a mere accommodation to human infirmity of understanding that the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed to us in language, inadequate indeed to convey divine truths, but still the only language possible; and I asked whether some such feeling was not present in his mind when he used the pronoun "His" in the above passage from "Modern Painters" of the Son, where it would be usually understood of the Father; and as a corollary, whether, in the letter, he does not himself fully recognise the fact of the redemption of the world by the loving self-sacrifice of the Son being in entire concurrence with the equally loving will of the Father. This, as well as I can recollect, is the origin of the passage in the second paragraph in this seventh letter.—EDITOR OF LETTERS.

* "Yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9).—EDITOR.

we are not teaching the people what is specially the Gospel of *Christ* as having a distinct function, namely, to *serve* the Father, and do the Father's will. And in all His human relations to us, and commands to us, it is as the Son of Man, not as the "power of God and wisdom of God," that He acts and speaks. Not as the Power; for *He* must pray, like one of us. Not as the Wisdom; for He must not know "if it be possible" His prayer should be heard.

And in what I want to say of the third clause of His prayer (*His*, not merely as His ordering, but His using), it is especially this comparison between *His* kingdom, and His Father's, that I want to see the disciples guarded against. I believe very few, even of the most earnest, using that petition, realize that it is the Father's—not the Son's—kingdom, that they pray may

come,—although the whole prayer is foundational on that fact: "*For* Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." And I fancy that the mind of the most faithful Christian is quite led away from its proper hope, by dwelling on the reign—or the coming again—of Christ; which, indeed, they are to look for, and *watch* for, but not to pray for. Their prayer is to be for the greater kingdom to which He, risen and having all His enemies under His feet, is to surrender *His*, "that God may be All in All."

And, though the greatest, it is that everlasting kingdom which the poorest of us can advance. We cannot hasten Christ's coming. "Of the day and the hour, knoweth no man." But the kingdom of God is as a grain of mustard-seed:—we can sow of it; it is as a foam-globe of leaven:—we can mingle it; and its glory and its joy are that

even the birds of the air can lodge in the branches thereof.

Forgive me for getting back to my sparrows; but truly in the present state of England, the fowls of the air are the only creatures, tormented and murdered as they are, that yet have here and there nests, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And it would be well if many of us, in reading that text, "The kingdom of God is NOT meat and drink," had even got so far as to the understanding that it is at least *as much*, and that until we had fed the hungry, there was no power in us to inspire the unhappy.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

I will write my feeling about the pieces of the Life of Christ* you have

* The Life and Work of Jesus Christ. Ward and Lock.

sent me in a private letter. I may say at once that I am sure it will do much good, and will be upright and intelligible, which how few religious writings are?

VIII

γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.

Fiat voluntas tua sicut in cœlo et in terra.

BRANTWOOD, 9*th August*, 1879.

I was reading the second chapter of Malachi this morning by chance, and wondering how many clergymen ever read it, and took to heart the "commandment for *them*."

For they are always ready enough to call themselves priests (though they know themselves to be nothing of the sort), whenever there is any dignity to

be got out of the title; but, whenever there is any good, hot scolding or unpleasant advice given them by the prophets, in that self-assumed character of theirs, they are as ready to quit it as ever Dionysus his lion-skin, when he finds the character of Herakles inconvenient.

"Ye have wearied the Lord with your words;" (yes, and some of His people too, in your time), "yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?"

How many, again and again I wonder, of the lively young ecclesiastics supplied to the increasing demand of our west ends of flourishing Cities of the Plain, ever consider what sort of sin it is for which God (unless they lay it to heart) will "curse their blessings, and spread

dung upon their faces;" or have understood, even in the dimmest manner, what part *they* had taken, and were taking, in "corrupting the covenant of the Lord with Levi, and causing many to stumble at the Law."

Perhaps the most subtle and unconscious way in which the religious teachers upon whom the ends of the world are come, have done this, is in never telling their people the meaning of the clause in the Lord's Prayer, which, of all others, their most earnest hearers have oftenest on their lips: "Thy will be done." They allow their people to use it as if their Father's will were always to kill their babies, or do something unpleasant to them; and following comfort and wealth, instead of explaining to them that the first and intensest article of their Father's will was their own sanctification; and that

the one only path to national prosperity and to domestic peace, was to understand what the will of the Lord was, and to do all they could to get it done. Whereas one would think, by the tone of the eagerest preachers nowadays, that they held their blessed office to be that, not of showing men how to do their Father's will on earth, but how to get to heaven without doing any of it either here or there!

I say, especially, the most eager preachers; for nearly the whole Missionary body (with the hottest Evangelistic sect of the English Church) is at this moment composed of men who think the Gospel they are to carry to mend the world with, forsooth, is that, "If any man sin, he hath an Advocate with the Father;" while I have never yet, in my own experience, met either with a Missionary or a Town Bishop

who so much as professed himself "to understand what the will of the Lord" was, far less to teach anybody else to do it; and for fifty preachers, yes, and fifty hundreds whom I have heard proclaiming the Mediator of the New Testament, that "they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance," I have never yet heard so much as *one* heartily proclaiming against all those "deceivers with vain words" (Eph. v. 6), that "no covetous person which is an idolater, hath *any* inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, or of God;" and on myself personally and publicly challenging the Bishops of England generally, and by name the Bishop of Manchester, to say whether usury was, or was not, according to the will of God, I have received no answer from any one of them.*

* Fors Clavigera, Letter lxxxii., p. 323.

13th August.

I have allowed myself, in the beginning of this letter, to dwell on the equivocal use of the word "Priest" in the English Church (see "Christopher Harvey," Grosart's edition, p. 38), because the assumption of the mediatorial, in defect of the pastoral, office by the clergy fulfils itself, naturally and always, in their pretending to absolve the sinner from his punishment, instead of purging him from his sin; and practically, in their general patronage and encouragement of all the iniquity of the world, by steadily preaching away the penalties of it. So that the great cities of the earth, which ought to be the places set on its hills, with the Temple of the Lord in the midst of them, to which the tribes should go up,—centres to the Kingdoms and Provinces of

Honour, Virtue, and the Knowledge of the law of God,—have become, instead, loathsome centres of fornication and covetousness — the smoke of their sin going up into the face of heaven like the furnace of Sodom, and the pollution of it rotting and raging through the bones and the souls of the peasant people round them, as if they were each a volcano whose ashes broke out in blains upon man and upon beast.

And in the midst of them, their freshly-set-up steeples ring the crowd to a weekly prayer that the rest of their lives may be pure and holy, while they have not the slightest intention of purifying, sanctifying, or changing their lives in any the smallest particular; and their clergy gather, each into himself, the curious dual power, and Janus-faced majesty in mischief, of the prophet that prophesies falsely, and

the priest that bears rule by his means.

And the people love to have it so.

BRANTWOOD, 12*th August.*

I am very glad of your little note from Brighton. I thought it needless to send the two letters there, which you will find at home; and they pretty nearly end all *I* want to say; for the remaining clauses of the prayer touch on things too high for me. But I will send you one concluding letter about them.

IX

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον.

Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie.

BRANTWOOD, 19*th August.*

I retained the foregoing letter by me till now, lest you should think it written

in any haste or petulance: but it is every word of it deliberate, though expressing the bitterness of twenty years of vain sorrow and pleading concerning these things. Nor am I able to write, otherwise, anything of the next following clause of the prayer;—for no words could be burning enough to tell the evils which have come on the world from men's using it thoughtlessly and blasphemously, praying God to give them what they are deliberately resolved to steal. For all true Christianity is known—as its Master was—in breaking of bread, and all false Christianity in stealing it.

Let the clergyman only apply—with impartial and level sweep—to his congregation the great pastoral order: "The man that will not work, neither should he eat;" and be resolute in requiring each member of his flock to

tell him *what*—day by day—they do to earn their dinners;—and he will find an entirely new view of life and its sacraments open upon him and them.

For the man who is not—day by day—doing work which will earn his dinner, must be stealing his dinner; and the actual fact is, that the great mass of men calling themselves Christians do actually live by robbing the poor of their bread, and by no other trade whatsoever; and the simple examination of the mode of the produce and consumption of European food—who digs for it, and who eats it—will prove that to any honest human soul.

Nor is it possible for any Christian Church to exist but in pollutions and hypocrisies beyond all words, until the virtues of a life moderate in its self-indulgence, and wide in its offices of temporal ministry to the poor, are

insisted on as the normal conditions in which, only, the prayer to God for the harvest of the earth is other than blasphemy.

In the second place. Since in the parable in Luke, the bread asked for is shown to be also, and chiefly, the Holy Spirit (Luke xi. 13), and the prayer, "Give us each day our daily bread" is, in its fulness, the disciples' "Lord, evermore give us *this* bread," —the clergyman's question to his whole flock, primarily literal, "Children, have ye here any meat?" must ultimately be always the greater spiritual one: "Children, have ye here any Holy Spirit?" or, "Have ye not heard yet whether there *be* any? and, instead of a Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of Life, do you only believe in an unholy mammon, Lord and Giver of Death?"

The opposition between the two

Lords has been, and will be as long as the world lasts, absolute, irreconcilable, mortal; and the clergyman's first message to his people of this day is—if he be faithful—"Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve."

Ever faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

X

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν

Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.

BRANTWOOD, *3rd September.*

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I have been very long before trying to say so much as a word about the sixth clause of the Pater; for whenever I began thinking of it, I was stopped by the sorrowful

sense of the hopeless task you poor clergymen had, nowadays, in recommending and teaching people to love their enemies, when their whole energies were already devoted to swindling their friends.

But, in any days, past or now, the clause is one of such difficulty, that, to understand it, means almost to know the love of God which passeth knowledge.

But, at all events, it is surely the pastor's duty to prevent his flock from *mis*understanding it; and above all things to keep them from supposing that God's forgiveness is to be had simply for the asking, by those who "wilfully sin after they have received the knowledge of the truth."

There is one very simple lesson, also, needed especially by people in circumstances of happy life, which I have

never heard fully enforced from the pulpit, and which is usually the more lost sight of, because the fine and inaccurate word "trespasses" is so often used instead of the simple and accurate one, "debts." Among people well educated and happily circumstanced, it may easily chance that long periods of their lives pass without any such conscious sin as could, on any discovery or memory of it, make them cry out, in truth and in pain, "I have sinned against the Lord." But scarcely an hour of their happy days can pass over them without leaving—were their hearts open—some evidence written there that they have "left undone the things that they ought to have done," and giving them bitterer and heavier cause to cry and cry again—for ever, in the pure words of their Master's prayer, "Dimitte nobis *debita* nostra."

In connection with the more accurate translation of "debts," rather than "trespasses," it would surely be well to keep constantly in the mind of complacent and inoffensive congregations, that in Christ's own prophecy of the manner of the last judgment, the condemnation is pronounced only on the sins of omission: "I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat."

But, whatever the manner of sin, by offence or defect, which the preacher fears in his people, surely he has of late been wholly remiss in compelling their definite recognition of it, in its several and personal particulars. Nothing in the various inconsistency of human nature is more grotesque than its willingness to be taxed with any quantity of sins in the gross, and its resentment at the insinuation of having committed the smallest parcel of them in detail. And

the English Liturgy, evidently drawn up with the amiable intention of making religion as pleasant as possible to a people desirous of saving their souls with no great degree of personal inconvenience, is perhaps in no point more unwholesomely lenient than in its concession to the popular conviction that we may obtain the present advantage, and escape the future punishment, of any sort of iniquity, by dexterously concealing the manner of it from man, and triumphantly confessing the quantity of it to God.

Finally, whatever the advantages and decencies of a form of prayer, and how wide soever the scope given to its collected passages, it cannot be at one and the same time fitted for the use of a body of well-taught and experienced Christians, such as should join the services of a Church nineteen centuries old,

—and adapted to the needs of the timid sinner who has that day first entered its porch, or of the remorseful publican who has only recently become sensible of his call to a pew.

And surely our clergy need not be surprised at the daily increasing distrust in the public mind of the efficacy of Prayer, after having so long insisted on their offering supplication, *at least* every Sunday morning at eleven o'clock, that the rest of their lives hereafter might be pure and holy, leaving them conscious all the while that they would be similarly required to inform the Lord next week, at the same hour, that "there was no health in them"!

Among the much rebuked follies and abuses of so-called "Ritualism," none that I have heard of are indeed so dangerously and darkly "Ritual" as this piece of authorized mockery of the

most solemn act of human life, and only entrance of eternal life—Repentance.

Believe me, dear Mr. Malleson,

Ever faithfully and respectfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

XI

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμὸν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ· ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμὴν.

Et ne nos inducas in tentationem; sed libera nos a malo; Quia tuum est regnum, potentia, et gloria in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

BRANTWOOD, 14*th September*, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—The gentle words in your last letter referring to the difference between yourself and me in

the degree of hope with which you could regard what could not but appear to the general mind Utopian in designs for the action of the Christian Church, surely might best be answered by appeal to the consistent tone of the prayer we have been examining.

Is not every one of its petitions for a perfect state? and is not this last clause of it, of which we are to think to-day—if fully understood—a petition not only for the restoration of Paradise, but of Paradise in which there shall be no deadly fruit, or, at least, no tempter to praise it? And may we not admit that it is probably only for want of the earnest use of this last petition, that not only the preceding ones have become formal with us, but that the private and simply restricted prayer for the little things we each severally desire, has become by some Christians dreaded and

unused, and by others used faithlessly, and therefore with disappointment?

And is it not for want of this special directness and simplicity of petition, and of the sense of its acceptance, that the whole nature of prayer has been doubted in our hearts, and disgraced by our lips; that we are afraid to ask God's blessing on the earth, when the scientific people tell us He has made previous arrangements to curse it; and that, instead of obeying, without fear or debate, the plain order, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full," we sorrowfully sink back into the apology for prayer, that "it is a wholesome exercise, even when fruitless," and that we ought piously always to suppose that the text really means no more than "Ask, and ye shall *not* receive, that your joy may be *empty*"?

Supposing we were first all of us quite sure that we *had* prayed, honestly, the prayer against temptation, and that we would thankfully be refused anything we had set our hearts upon, if indeed God saw that it would lead us into evil, might we not have confidence afterwards that He in whose hand the King's heart is, as the rivers of water, would turn our tiny little hearts also in the way that they should go, and that *then* the special prayer for the joys He taught them to seek, would be answered to the last syllable, and to overflowing?

It is surely scarcely necessary to say, farther, what the holy teachers of all nations have invariably concurred in showing,—that faithful prayer implies always correlative exertion; and that no man can ask honestly or hopefully to be delivered from temptation, unless

he has himself honestly and firmly determined to do the best he can to keep out of it. But, in modern days, the first aim of all Christian parents is to place their children in circumstances where the temptations (which they are apt to call "opportunities") may be as great and as many as possible; where the sight and promise of "all these things" in Satan's gift may be brilliantly near; and where the act of "falling down to worship me" may be partly concealed by the shelter, and partly excused, as involuntary, by the pressure, of the concurrent crowd.

In what respect the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of *them*, differ from the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, which are God's for ever, is seldom, as far as I have heard, intelligibly explained from the pulpit; and still less the irreconcilable hostility

between the two royalties and realms asserted in its sternness of decision.

Whether it be indeed Utopian to believe that the kingdom we are taught to pray for *may* come—verily come—for the asking, it is surely not for man to judge; but it is at least at his choice to resolve that he will no longer render obedience, nor ascribe glory and power, to the Devil. If he cannot find strength in himself to advance towards Heaven, he may at least say to the power of Hell, "Get thee behind me;" and staying himself on the testimony of Him who saith, "Surely I come quickly," ratify his happy prayer with the faithful "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Ever, my dear friend,

Believe me affectionately
and gratefully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

ESSAYS AND COMMENTS

ON THE

FOREGOING LETTERS

BY THE EDITOR

ESSAYS AND COMMENTS

FEELING deeply, and anxiously, the greatness of the responsibility laid upon me to act, as it were, the part of an envoy between so eminent a teacher as Mr. Ruskin and my brethren in the Ministry, I have thought that it might not be taken amiss if I prefaced my account of the origin of the series of letters placed in my hands for publication (see Letter 8th July, 1879)* with just a mere allusion to one written to me four years ago.

One or two imperfect conversations, leading up to the subject of the Resurrection, which had been broken off by accidental circumstances, together with the letter alluded to, had stimulated in me a feeling of something more than curiosity — rather one of anxious interest—to learn more of Mr. Ruskin's views

* No. IV.

upon matters which are at the present day giving rise to a good deal of agitated discussion among intellectual men.

I am thankful to be able to avow that, for my own part, I am a firm and conscientious, not a thoughtless and passive, believer in the doctrines of the Church of Christ as held by the majority of serious-minded religious men in the Established Church. Mr. Ruskin was mistaken in his much too ready assumption that I (simply because I am a clergyman) am a believer on compulsion; that for the peace of my soul I have only to thank religious anæsthetics, and that I ever preach against the wickedness of involuntary doubt. God forbid that I should ever take on myself to denounce as wilful sin any scruples of conscience which owe their origin to honest inquiries after truth. I trust that he knows me better now.

Feeling thus decided and certain as to the ground I stand upon, and earnestly desirous on every account to investigate the nature of Mr. Ruskin's doubts, whatever they might be, in a most fraternal spirit, as a kindly-favoured friend and neighbour (for, in our lake and

mountain district, an interval of a dozen miles does not destroy neighbourhood between spirits with any degree of kinship), I sought for a more lengthened conversation, and obtained the opportunity without difficulty. The occasion was found in a very delightful summer afternoon on the lake, and up the sides of the Old Man of Coniston, to view a group of remarkable rocks by the desolate, storm-beaten crags of Goat's Water,* that saddest and loneliest of mountain tarns, which lies in the deep hollow between the mountain and its opposing buttress, the Dow Crags. This most interesting ramble in the undivided company of one so highly and so deservedly valued in the world of letters and of art and higher matters yet, served to my mind for more purposes than one, while we wandered amidst impressive scenes, passing from the sweet and gentle peaceful loveliness of the bright green vale of Coniston and its charming lake to the bleak desolation, the terrible sublimity of the mountain tarn barriered in by its stupendous crags, amongst which lay those singular-looking,

* "Deucalion," p. 222.

weather-beaten, and lightning-riven rocks which were the more immediate object of our visit.

But to myself the chief and happiest result of our conversation was the firm conviction that neither the censorious and unthinking world, nor perhaps even Mr. Ruskin himself, knows how deeply and truly a Christian man, in the widest sense of the word, Mr. Ruskin is. It is neither the time nor the place, nor indeed would it be consistent with propriety, to analyze before others the convictions formed on that memorable summer afternoon. It must suffice for the present to say that the opinions then formed laid the foundation of a friendship on a happier basis than that which had heretofore been permitted me, and prepared my way to enter with confidence upon the plan of which the present volume is the fruit.

Last June, in the course of a short visit to Brantwood, I proposed to Mr. Ruskin to come to address the members of a Northern Clerical Society, a body of some seventy or eighty clergy, who have done me the honour to appoint me their honorary secretary, now for

about nine years, since its foundation. On the ground of impaired health, the legacy left behind it by the serious illness which had, two years before, threatened even his life, Mr. Ruskin excused himself from appearing in person before our Society; but proposed instead to write letters to me which might serve as a basis for discussion amongst us.

Letter I. will explain the origin of the series that come after.

On Letter II

The question laid down in this letter, cleared of all metaphorical ornament, is, as is perfectly natural and instinctive with Mr. Ruskin, one which goes down to the foundation of things—here, the character and mission of the Christian ministry. Are we (Mr. Ruskin implies, Are we *not?*) bound to believe and to teach after certain formulæ, which, being many of them peculiar to ourselves, separate us from the national Churches of France and Italy? Are we free, or are we bound? Or do we enjoy a reasonable amount of liberty and no more?

On the platform we occupy do we allow none but English Churchmen to stand? Must we keep all other Christians at arm's length? Do the conditions attached to the emoluments we receive prohibit us from holding or teaching any other opinions than those we have subscribed to?

It is a question not to be approached without a tremor. But no abstract answer can well be given. Human nature replies for itself in the spectacle of the clergy of the Church of England divided and subdivided; here deeply sundered, there of different complexions amicably blending together, holding every variety of opinion which the Church allows or disallows within her borders. Human nature absolutely refuses to be shackled in its positive beliefs. Authority may try, or even appear to perform, the feat of fettering thought and making men march in step to one common end in orderly ranks; but she has invariably at last to confess her impotence.*

The ministers of the Church cannot safely be set free by Act of Parliament to teach whatever

* The clergyman who subscribes still whispers to himself, or soon will, "Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri."

seems good to each. Some respect must be shown to congregations too. If the clergy claim on their side the right of independent thought, which they are quite justified in doing, the congregations on their side have a much greater right to a consistent teaching, which shall not distract their minds with strange and unwonted forms of Christianity.

Mr. Ruskin, as he often does, is going *too deep.* He asks for that which we shall never see in this world,—the simple, pure religion of the Bible to be taught in all singleness and simplicity of mind by men whose only commission is held from God, by or without the channel of human authority, to show men, women, and children the way "to the summit of the celestial mountains," and to set an awful warning by conspicuous beacons against the "crevasses which go down quickest to the pit." But who shall say that he is wrong? Nay, rather, it is we that are wrong in resting satisfied with our low views of things, while Ruskin soars above our heads.

On Letter III

I would preface the few remarks I wish to make upon this letter by an extract from a letter just received from a dear good friend :

"I have already read these deeply interesting letters five times. They are like 'the foam-globes of leaven.' I must say they have exercised my mind very much. Things in them which at first seem rather startling, prove on closer examination to be full of deep truth. The suggestions in them lead to 'great searchings of heart.' There is much with which I entirely agree; much over which to ponder. What an insight into human nature is shown in the remark that though we are so ready to call ourselves 'miserable sinners' we resent being accused of any special fault!

"S. B."

By the side of this, it will be instructive, though strange, if I place an extract from another note from one whom I have long known and highly esteemed; and it will be

seen what a singular "discerner of hearts" and "divider of spirits" is this series of letters :—

"If they are really meant *au sérieux*, I could not express any opinion of them without implying a reflection upon you also, as you seem to endorse them so fully. I prefer, therefore, to say merely that, as a whole, they offer one of the most remarkable instances I ever met with of the old adage, 'Ne sutor ultra crepidam.'" *

In spite of this I retain all my old high opinion of the writer of these lines, and feel convinced that he will soon think very differently.

* Let me say here, once for all, that I have already three times had this proverb quoted against Mr. Ruskin ; and no proverb could be more remote from the purpose. For while it is the shoemaker's business, *as a livelihood*, to make shoes, a painter's to paint pictures, the merchant's to sell goods, and perhaps Mr. Ruskin's to write books which every one reads, *religion is everybody's business.* Christian men and women, of all classes and professions, make the Bible their study, because of its inestimable importance ; and who shall say that they are not absolutely right? For my part I should be very glad to hear that my bootmaker was a religious man : his boots would be none the worse for it. I hope the *sutor* will be brought in no more, unless he can appear with a better grace.

Yes, it is as my first correspondent has said, "Things which at first seem startling, on examination prove to be full of deep truth." In the short compass of this Letter III. lies enfolded a vast question, which, in the midst of the friction and conflict of ages of strife, has been shuffled away into odd corners, to be brought out into life only now and then, when a man is born into the world who sees what few will even glance at, and who will say out that which ought to be spoken, though but few may listen. What is the question which is put here so tersely and so pointedly? It is this, which I am only putting a little differently, not with the most distant idea of improving upon Mr. Ruskin's felicitous touches; but, because expressed in twofold fashion, what has escaped one may strike another in a different form.

Is a clergyman of the Church of England a teacher of the doctrine and practice and discipline of the Church of England within her limits only, narrow as they are, when compared with Christendom? or is there not rather a wider, more comprehensive Church yet—that of Christ upon earth—which he

must serve, which he must preach, in forgetfulness of the limited boundaries within which by his education and his ordination vows he is *apparently* bound to remain? Is there not enough of Christianity common to all the Christian nations upon earth, and which ought to be made the subject of teaching to the ignorant and the castaway? Is it quite a right thing that the natives of Madagascar, for instance, should see parties of missionaries arriving amongst them: one, in all the gorgeous trappings and with all the elaborate ritual of Rome; another in rusty black coats and hats and dirty white neckties, repudiating all but the very barest necessary ceremonial; a third, possibly disunited in itself, coming as High Churchmen or Low Churchmen, with differing peculiarities? Is this an edifying spectacle for the Malagasy? And can the Gospel be preached as effectually in this highly diversified fashion as it would be with the simplicity of a reasonable and just sufficiently elastic uniformity?

Coming before many people of infinite diversity of mind, it cannot be doubted that Christianity must necessarily take a variety of

forms, to suit different intelligences, and adapt itself to differing situations. But in all this large variety of forms of religion, ranging from mere paganism at one end, just a little unavoidably altered by the contact of Christianity, and at the other extremity a pure religion, but refined and intellectual, I do not see exactly what is the form of Christianity which the Church of England is to preach to the masses at home and abroad. As long as England takes the Gospel to the ignorant in such infinitely diversified forms, it is as if an incapable general were to divide his forces preparatory to an assault upon a compact and well-defended stronghold.

It is enough to make one weep with vexation and humiliation to see what sort of religion would be presented to the world if some who claim to have all truth on their side could have their own way. I say to have the truth on their side,—which is a very different thing from being on the side of truth. There is even a new religion—for it is certainly not the old—growing popular with "thinkers," who write and read in the three great half-crown monthlies, which is evolved in the most curious

variety out of their inner consciousness by religion-makers, whose fertile brains are the only soil that can bring forth such productions. What is the vast uneducated world to do with these extraordinary forms of religion which are as many-sided and many-faced as their inventors?

Now Mr. Ruskin and many others see this state of things with pity and compassion, and ask, "Cannot this Gospel of Christ be put into such plain words and short terms as that a plain man may understand it?" Why is there no such easy summary provided by authority to teach the poor and simple? The Apostles' Creed is good for its own end and purpose, but it requires great expansion to be made to include Gospel teaching, and it contains nothing practical. The Thirty-nine Articles are not even intended (as Mr. Ruskin by some oversight seems to think they are) to be a summary of the Gospel. We have no concise and plain, clear and intelligible form of sound words to answer this most important end. The Church Catechism, from old associations, belongs to childhood.

Every reasonable person must agree with Mr. Ruskin, that there could be no harm, but much good, in Christians making a little less of their Churchmanship, and a little more of their broad Christianity.

On Letter IV

Mr. Ruskin pleads in this letter with touching eloquence for the guidance of the law of love, that irresistible law, one effect of which is to give to the highest probability the force of a sufficient certainty, and establishes in the man the mental habit best described as *certitude*.

In Cardinal Newman's "History of My Religious Opinions," p. 18, he quotes some beautiful passages from Keble's conversations with himself (disagreeing with him all the time), in which he had quoted, "I will guide thee *with mine eye*" (Psalm xxxii. 8), as the expression of the gentle suasive power that directs the steps of the child and friend of God, as distinguished from "the bit and bridle" laid upon horse and mule, who represent

unwilling slaves recognising no law but that of force or coercion. It is an Eye whose gaze is ever fixed on us, the "Eye of God's Word," "like that of a portrait uniformly fixed on us, turn where we will."* And Keble is right so far as concerns the true children and friends of God, subject, as their highest control, to the law of love. Pure and exalted minds ever strain for, and yearn after, a general and outward manifestation of the witness that man is "the image and glory of God" (1 Cor. xi. 7).

Unhappily, we are not so constituted by nature. The inroads and ravages of sin are but too evident, as well in those upon whom episcopal hands have been laid, as in the ranks of the laity. Are not wilfulness and pride of intellect and glorification of self ever exercising such a power in the earth, that checks and restraints are found absolutely necessary to curb and control the determination of many of the ministers of the Church not only to *think* as seems good to them (which they have a perfect right to do), but openly to *teach and*

* "Christian Year," St. Bartholomew's Day, with quotations from Miller's Bampton Lectures.

to preach whatever doctrines they may have conceived in their own minds, or have learnt from others, contrary to the received doctrines of the Church of England; which they have no right to do as long as they remain ministers of the Church whose doctrines they impugn?

Mr. Ruskin correctly assumes that the terms of the Lord's Prayer, being in the very words of Christ, do contain a body of Divine doctrine; and they would be the fittest to adopt as a standard of Christian teaching, *if* only all men were as candid, sincere, and straightforward as himself. But because there is no certainty that any large and preponderating body of men will exhibit these graces of Christianity in themselves, and combine with them gentleness, tolerance, and forbearance, therefore they *must* be held in "with bit and bridle," —that is, with Articles and Creeds and declarations, — "lest they fall upon thee," and fill the Church more full of sedition, disaffection, and disquiet than it already is.

Cardinal Newman himself is an example of the necessity of the restraints of creeds, as well, indeed, as of their general inefficiency to

maintain unity. His "History of my Religious Opinions," at least in its beginning, is but the story of a long succession of phases of belief and disbelief, originating in—what? In study of the Word of God? in Divine contemplation, or in devout and thoughtful meditation? No, indeed; but in walks and conversations, now with one friend, now with another, now round the Quadrangle of Oriel, then in Christ Church meadows; in fanciful, and apparently causeless, changes in his own mind, of which sometimes he can give the exact date, sometimes he has forgotten it, but which lead him out of one set of opinions into another in a helpless kind of way, as if he knew of no motive power but the influence of other men's minds or the momentary and fitful fluctuations of a spirit ever too much given to introspection to maintain a steady and uniform course.

What a contrast between the downright, manly straightforwardness of a Ruskin and the fluttering, uncertain flights of a Newman, ending in the cold, dead fixity of the Roman faith, whereof to doubt is to be damned!

On Letter V

The next paragraph to the last in this letter, contains a statement which at first might seem to be rashly expressed. But I was not long in apprehending that when Mr. Ruskin alludes to a scheme of pardon "for which we are supposed to be thankful, not to the Father, but to the Son," he was far from impugning that doctrine of the Atonement in which, as it is generally understood among Christian people, the whole plan of salvation centres.

But there seems to have been a fatality about this sentence. Numbers have read it and commented upon it, myself amongst the number, as if Mr. Ruskin were here expressing *his own view;* instead of which, he is here quoting other men's opinions, to condemn them with severity. The *Record* called it some of Mr. Ruskin's dross; but it is other people's dross, for which he would offer us pure gold.

I happened, a very short time previous to receiving this letter, to have had my attention attracted by the following passage of Mr.

Ruskin's own:—"When, in the desert, He was girding Himself for the work of life, angels of life came and ministered to Him; now, in the fair world, when He is girding Himself for the work of death [at the Transfiguration], the ministrants came to Him from the grave. But from the grave conquered. One from that tomb under Abarim, which His own hand had sealed long ago; the other from the rest which He had entered without seeing corruption."

Pleased with the truthful eloquence of this passage, I placed it at the head of the chapter on the Transfiguration in my book on the Life and Work of Christ (still in the press). Having done so, it struck me that Mr. Ruskin, whether intentionally or undesignedly, had made the pronoun "His" to apply either to God the Father, or to God the Son. It may grammatically refer to either. From this I drew the conclusion which I expressed in a short letter to my friend, that, discarding the strictly human uses of language, which, from its unavoidable poverty, lacks the power of marking the true nature of the difference between the Divine Persons of the Holy

Trinity, he had spoken of the Father and of the Son indiscriminately or indifferently, *i.e.*, without a difference.

And so it really is. How shall a man, though at the highest he be "but a little lower than the angels," know and comprehend the Godhead in its true and exact nature? The names father and son express an earthly relation perfectly well understood when belonging to ourselves, but when applied to the Supreme Divine Being, they must of necessity fall far short of expressing their true connexion with one another. They are, when applied to Heavenly beings, merely anthropomorphic terms used in compassion to our infirmities, and conveying to us only an approximation to the ideas intended. We say the Father sent the Son; the Son suffered for our sins. But since Father and Son are One, we are plainly expressing something short of the exact state of the case when we speak of our thankfulness to the Son as if we had no reason to be equally thankful to the Father.

The Athanasian Creed makes no great demand upon our mental powers when it requires

of us, in speaking of the Trinity, neither to confound the Persons nor to divide the Substance; for, in truth, I suppose we are equally incapable of doing either.

These are Divine matters, of which, while the simplest may know enough, the wisest can never fathom the whole depth. For the Divine power and love, knowledge and compassion, will never be fully comprehended until we know even as we are known.

But, as I am abstaining from questioning Mr. Ruskin as to his meaning in any passage, if it happens to be slightly obscure, awaiting his reply at the close of the book, I may here say that I believe that this sentence refers to a wild and unscriptural kind of preaching, happily becoming less common, in which undue stress is laid upon the wrathfulness of God, as contrasted with the mercy of the Saviour, as if we had only the Son to thank, and not our loving Father in Heaven, for the blessed hope of eternal life. Some there are, and always will be, who habitually err in not rightly dividing the Word of God, and giving undue prominence to a dark portion of doctrine, which is true enough in itself, but would be

relieved of much of its gloom, if due prominence were given to other parts of the truth of God.

I do not mean to praise caution at the expense of courage. I have a constitutional aversion to that caution allied to timidity and cowardice which prompts a man to look to his safety, comfort, and worldly repute as the first social law that concerns *him*. I admire rather the brave man who is ready to sacrifice all that, if he can, by so doing, gain the desired right end.

But in the case before us, it is not so. Men talk as if all we had to do to convert a sinner from the error of his way was to give him a good talking, forgetting that we have not a plastic material to work upon, but a most stubborn and intractable one, wherever interest is concerned; and that a bold bad man is generally proof against talk, and yields to no power but the grace of God exercised directly, and seconded by His heavy judgments. Have we not all seen, with shame and astonishment, the "wicked rich" regularly in their places at church, much oftener than the "wicked poor," who have less

interest in playing the hypocrite? And have we not felt our utter powerlessness, whether by public preaching or by private monition, to find a way to those case-hardened hearts? What are we to do with such a man as Tennyson describes in "Sea Dreams," who

> "began to bloat himself, and ooze
> All over with the fat affectionate smile
> That makes the widow lean;"

when his victim—

> "Pursued him down the street, and far away,
> Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
> Read rascal in the motions of his back,
> And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee."

Here is all that we can do—told us in the last sweet lines:—

> "'She sleeps: let us too, let all evil, sleep.
> He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.
> He can do no more wrong: forgive him, dear,
> And I shall sleep the sounder!'
> Then the man,
> 'His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to come;
> Yet let your sleep for this one night be sound:
> I do forgive him.'
> 'Thanks, my love,' she said,
> 'Your own will be the sweeter;' and they slept."

On Letter VI

As is the manner of our friend, he concludes a letter which was begun with thoughtful wisdom, with a proposal which, if gravely made, will seem to most of us both unpractical and impracticable.

Very forcible and very true is the emphatic declaration here made of the deep, perhaps unpardonable sinfulness of taking in vain the holy name of God.

But, to my mind, the irremediable fault in the latter proposition in this letter is the assumption that every honest clergyman of average capacity, and of ordinary experience of life, is, of course, wise enough to discern men's characters and to judge them with that unerring sagacity that will enable him to pronounce without favour or distinction of persons the severe sentence: "You shall not enter this house of God. I interdict your presence here. The comforts and privileges of religion are for other than thou. I deny thee the prayers, the preaching, and the sacraments of the Church." More briefly—"I excommunicate thee."

Even in the case of a very bad man this would be found impossible to accomplish without the direst danger to the clergyman's usefulness and influence, to say nothing of his peace. For our experience abundantly shows that let a bad man but be audacious, and even ruffianly enough, helped by his position, he will always find plenty of support among the powerful and influential. The poor and honest clergyman, if he has attempted to enforce Church discipline, will be gravely rebuked for his want of charity, for his sad lack of discretion or tact, for his utter want of worldly wisdom; he will very soon find, to use the familiar phrase, the place too hot for him, and he may be thankful if he escapes with some small remainder of respect or compassion from the nobler-minded of his flock, who are always in a very small minority.

I know not how it really was in the time when the rubrics of the Communion Services were framed. One would think, judging from these, that the clergyman possessed unlimited power to judge and punish with spiritual deprivation, and that he was alone to unite in himself all the various offices of accuser and

police, counsel, jury, and judge. We are required to say every Ash Wednesday that we regret the loss of the godly discipline of the Primitive Church—under which, "at the beginning of Lent, all such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance; and that it is much to be wished that the said discipline may be restored again." But few can seriously view a realization of that wish without fear for the certain consequences.

The truth is, the world moves on. Human nature may remain the same; but the laws and usages of society are subject to changes which it is useless to withstand. At the present day, great, rather too great, perhaps, are the claims of *charity*. We are told to hope for the best in the worst of cases; we are to forgive all, even the still hardened and unrepenting; we are to smile upon heresy and schism; we are to treat the rude, the churlish, the hard of heart, amidst our flocks, as if we had the greatest regard for them! I am not prepared to say that this is in every way to be regretted; for these are errors that lean perhaps to virtue's side. But I

certainly do think that often a little more fearlessness in rebuking vice would not come amiss.

But, on the other hand, suppose for a moment the clergy to have the undisputed power to bar out both the wicked rich and the wicked poor from their churches, this power would be of very little use ; nay, it would be full of mischief and danger, without a sound judgment, a fearless spirit, and a heart little used to the melting mood. The clergy, as a class, may perhaps be a trifle superior to the laity in moral character, in spiritual knowledge, and in judgment in dealing with people, because their profession has early trained (or at any rate, ought to have trained) them in the constant and imperative exercise of self-examination and self-control, and the careful discernment of character in their intercourse with men. But that superiority, if it exists at all, is so trifling as to make very little impression on the laity, who would naturally be ready at any step to dispute the wisdom or expediency of the judicial acts of the clergy.

Further, again : given both the wisdom to judge and the power to doom, would it be

desirable to establish a rule that the open and notorious sinner (though there would always be differences of opinion upon what he really is, even among the clergy themselves) should be prevented from coming where he might, above all other places, be most likely to hear words that would touch his heart and bring him to a better mind? From the pulpit, words of counsel, of holy doctrine, and of heart-stirring precepts of the Gospel, fall with a power and weight which are rarely to be found in private conversations. Many an open and notorious sinner has first yielded up his heart to God under the powerful influence of preaching. When Jesus sat in the Pharisee's house, all the publicans and sinners drew near to hear Him; and the orthodox sinners, the Pharisees, made bitter complaints that He received and ate with the scorned and rejected sinners. God forbid that the day should ever come when spiritual pride and exclusiveness shall shut out even the hardest of sinners from the house of God; for who can tell where or when the word may be spoken which shall break the stony heart, and replace it with the tender heart of flesh, soon to be filled with

love and devotion to God the Saviour and Redeemer?

But, as this is a subject of great importance, may I also say a word in support of Mr. Ruskin's own view that the wicked should be discouraged, or even forbidden, to enter the house of God? We have 2 Cor. vi. 14–18, which seems to point out that, in the primitive Church, the wicked were not allowed in the assemblies of the faithful. And we remember David's "I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked" (Psalm xxvi. 5). Is not Mr. Ruskin, perhaps, after all, only advocating a return to primitive usage?

Mr. Ruskin says in the Preface to his selected works: "What I wrote on religion was painstaking, and I think forcible, as compared with most religious writing; especially in its frankness and fearlessness." Unfortunately he adds, "But it was wholly mistaken."* He is still equally outspoken, frank, and fearless; but what he wrote upon religion, as far as I know it, in the days which he now condemns, will live and do good, as long as

* "Sesame and Lilies," p. iii., 1876.

the noble English language, of which he is one of the greatest masters, lives to convey to distant generations the great thoughts of the sons that are her proudest boast.

Additional Remarks on the Censures of the Church.

By the Editor.

Since writing my notes on Letter VI., in which Mr. Ruskin gives such vehement expression to his desire to see the ancient discipline of the Church restored, I have in conversation with himself learned this to be one of the objects he has most at heart in writing these letters; and I have also read in the Life of Bishop Selwyn, by the Rev. H. W. Tucker (vol. i., p. 241) that admirable prelate's view of this disregarded question. I believe Selwyn to have been the greatest uninspired missionary since the days of St. Paul (if indeed we can with truth consider so great a man wholly uninspired). But the great Bishop of the South Seas, in the charge from which copious extracts are there given, distinctly recommends the revival of spiritual discipline

and the censures of the Church upon unrepenting offenders. He refers for authority to apostolic example and precept, and to the discipline rubrics of the Communion Service, and adds the undeniable fact that our Anglican communion is the only branch of the Christian Church where such discipline is wanting.

I must ask leave to refer my readers to Mr. Tucker's book for the grounds in detail of the Bishop's wishes. I am not aware that any English prelate has ventured upon so hazardous an experiment; one, I should rather say, so certain to fail disastrously. The infancy of the Christian Church, and the Divine guidance directly exercised, rendered such discipline in the first centuries both practicable and effective.* But I do not remember that any parish priest of the Reformed Church has ever

* As these sheets are passing through the press, I happen to meet with these words of Bishop Wilberforce:—"The more I have thought over the matter, the more it seems to me that it was providentially intended that discipline, in the strictest sense of that word, should be the restraint of the early Church, and that it should gradually die out as the Church approached maturity, or rather turn from a formal and external rule to an inner work in the spirit—should run into the opening of God's Word and its application to the individual soul and life."—*Life*, vol. i., p. 230.

attempted to enforce the Communion rubrics, except, as we have learned from the public papers, in recent times, with disastrous consequences to the promoters. And what kind of wickedness is to be so visited? To prove drunkenness, or impurity, or fraudulent practices, or false doctrine (Canon 109), a judicial inquiry must be resorted to. Rebukes for lesser offences would certainly lead to disputes, if not even to recrimination! The irresistible circumstances of the age would entirely defeat any such endeavours. In towns, parochial limits are practically unknown or ignored, and families, or individuals, attend whatever church or chapel they please, no one preventing them, thus making all exercise of sacerdotal authority impracticable. In the country, even where only the parish church is within reach, it is highly probable that an offender would meet priestly excommunication by the easy expedient of cutting himself off from communication with his clergyman and his church; and even if he did not, it would be a very new state of things if the sentence were received with submission on the part of the offender, and acquiescence on that of the congregation.

In short, the thing is simply impossible; and I do not find that even Bishop Selwyn himself visited immorality with ecclesiastical censures, or supported his clergy in doing so; and I am using the word "immorality" in its full and proper sense, and not with that restricted meaning which confines it to a particular sin. It is true, as he says, that our Church stands alone in refraining from the exercise of such power. But in other religious bodies, the discretionary power to use such dangerous weapons is not left to individuals however gifted. It rests in a constituted body, on whom the whole responsibility would lie. But the isolation of the English clergyman in his church and parish forbids him thus to risk his whole usefulness and his social existence. Who would confirm him in his judgment? Who would stand by him in the troubles which he would assuredly entail upon himself? Would his churchwardens, his rural dean, his archdeacon, or his bishop? I think there would be little comfort to be found in any of these quarters.

On Letter VII

Excellent as is Canon Gray's letter (p. 169), I do not at all concur in his somewhat severe censure on the second paragraph in this letter, in which Mr. Ruskin, as I conceive, with complete theological accuracy, points out how in His human nature our Lord accepted and received some, perhaps many, of the deficiencies of our nature, human frailty and weakness, even human *liability* to sin, without, however, once yielding to its temptations. I have everywhere in my "Life of Christ" endeavoured to give reasons for my faith in this view, which, even if held, I know is not often professed.

If Christ had been perfectly insensible to the allurements of sin, where would be His fellow-feeling with us? It would be a mere outward semblance; nor would there then be any significance in the statement that "He was in all points tempted like as we are," if He had been able to view with calm indifference the inducements presented to Him from time to time to abandon His self-sacrificing work and consult His safety. The captain is

not to go securely armour-plated into the fight while the private soldier marches in his usual unprotected apparel. Nor will the Captain of our salvation protect Himself against the dangers which He invites us to encounter. If He knew nothing of sin from experience of its power, how could He be an example to us? Therefore I believe Mr. Ruskin to be perfectly right in affirming that in the words of Jesus we listen not to one speaking entirely in the Power and Wisdom of God, but to the Son of Man, bowed down, but not conquered, by afflictions, firm and unbending in His great purpose to bear in His own body the sin of the world—Son of Man, yet God Incarnate.

Nor does it seem to me "a hard way of speaking" when Mr. Ruskin rightly and plainly affirms the perfect humanity of Christ, which, however, Canon Gray correctly points out to be assumed and borne in accordance with His own will as perfect God. I am afraid that, good and kind as he is, it is Canon Gray himself who is a little hard in unconsciously imputing thoughts which had no existence in the writer's mind!

I cannot help being amused at the gravity with which certain critics shake their heads ominously over the last paragraph in this letter, and seriously ask, What can Mr. Ruskin mean by the "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" enjoyed by the birds? The Poet Laureate would hardly care to be brought to book for each poetical flight with which he charms his many appreciative readers, and to be asked to explain exactly what he means by each of those noble thoughts which are only revealed from soul to soul, and dissolve into fluid, like the beautiful brittle-star of our coasts, under the touch of a too curious hand.

How do we know but that the animal existence of these charming companions of our quiet hours is not accompanied by a spiritual existence too, as much inferior to our own spiritual state as their corporeal to ours? And therefore shall we boldly dare to say that they perish altogether and for ever? We may neither believe nor disbelieve in matters kept so completely secret from us. But we must be pardoned for leaning to a belief that the feathered creatures which spend

most of their brief life in singing loud praises to the loving Creator and Giver of all good, do not live quite for nothing beyond the dissolution of their little frames. There are no means of ascertaining this by scientific experiments, or even by the most ingenious processes of induction carefully recorded and duly referred to as occasion may arise. But certainly it is a harmless fancy which many have indulged in before Mr. Ruskin, without being charged with such unsoundness in doctrine as denying the Personality of the Holy Ghost! By-and-by it may be found that what men have believed in half in sport will be realized wholly in earnest. Just outside the churchyard wall of Ecclesfield may be seen (at least I saw it a few years ago) a little monumental stone to a favourite dog, with the text, "Thou, Lord, preservest man and beast." And in Kingsley's "Prose Idylls" I have just met most *àpropos* with the following beautiful passage, which many will read with pleasure, perhaps some with profit:—

"If anyone shall hint to us that we and the birds may have sprung originally from the same type; that

the difference between our intellect and theirs is one of degree, and not of kind, we may believe or doubt: but in either case we shall not be greatly moved. 'So much the better for the birds,' we will say, 'and none the worse for us. You raise the birds towards us: but you do not lower us towards them.' What we are, we are by the grace of God. Our own powers and the burden of them we know full well. It does not lessen their dignity or their beauty in our eyes to hear that the birds of the air partake, even a little, of the same gifts of God as we. Of old said St. Guthlac in Crowland, as the swallows sat upon his knee, 'He who leads his life according to the will of God, to him the wild deer and the wild birds draw more near;' and this new theory of yours may prove St. Guthlac right. St. Francis, too—he called the birds his brothers. Whether he was correct, either theologically or zoologically, he was plainly free from that fear of being mistaken for an ape, which haunts so many in these modern times. Perfectly sure that he himself was a spiritual being, he thought it at least possible that birds might be spiritual beings likewise, incarnate like himself in mortal flesh; and saw no degradation to the dignity of human nature in claiming kindred lovingly with creatures so beautiful, so wonderful, who (as he fancied in his old-fashioned way) praised God in the forest, even as angels did in heaven. In a word, the saint, though he was an ascetic, and certainly no man of science, was yet a poet, and somewhat of a philosopher; and would possibly—so do extremes meet—have hailed as

orthodox, while we hail as truly scientific, Wordsworth's great saying—

'Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear—both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognize
In Nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.'"

Charm of Birds.

On Letter VIII

What generous and enlightened spirit will not be stirred to its innermost depths by these words, burning as they are with a well-grounded indignation?

I dare say some of the clergy will have a word to say on their claim to the priesthood as implying a sacrificial and mediatorial character. On this point I will say nothing at present.

But it is an awfully solemn consideration put before us here, whether instead of the

pure blessings and the bright countenances intended to be ours, our accursed blessings and defiled faces are not the natural consequences of our wilful misunderstanding of what the will of the Lord is.

"Thy will be done" is a petition which can be offered up in two quite distinct senses. In the one, it is an expression of resignation to the Father's afflictive dispensations; in the other, the heartfelt desire to work out the revealed will of God in all the many-sided aspects of life. In the first sense, when sorrow or death has entered our door, our first impulse, if we are Christians, is to give evidence of, and expression to, our resignation by recognizing the *will of God.* Hence Mr. Ruskin interposes: "Are you so sure that it *was* the will of God that your child should die, or that you should have got into that trouble?" I look in my local paper in the column of deaths, and see in a neighbouring large town how extraordinary a proportion of deaths are those of children. I have taken occasional cemetery duty in one of the busiest centres of industry in Yorkshire, and was shocked at the large numbers

of funerals in white. Am I to believe it was the *will of God* that so many young children should perish, especially as I look to my own beautiful parish, with its sweet sea and mountain breezes mingled, where the deaths of children are comparatively rare? and am I not forced to believe that, even without the assistance of destitution—neglect and overcrowding, and "quieting mixtures" and ardent spirits, and kicks and blows have filled most of those little graves? I fear that the will of Satan is here being accomplished vastly to his satisfaction. And seldom does the Government do more than touch the fringe of these monstrous evils. Of course they say "We cannot interfere," or "Legislation in these matters is impracticable." But can we not all remember when it was just as certain that free trade in food was impracticable? but who does not see that it is saving us from famine this dark year 1879?—that compulsory education was revolutionary and full of unimaginable perils to the country, and yet who are so glad as the poor themselves, now that it has been carried into effect? It used to be thought that if people chose to kill themselves

with unwholesome open drains before their doors, there was no power able to prevent them. But we are wiser now. Legislators have generally been, or chosen to appear, like cowards till the time for action came, very late, and then they were decided enough. Now let us hope that a way may be found to save infant life from premature extinction by wholesale.

Let me use this opportunity of saying that in the letters we are now considering there is a feature which ought not to escape those who are desirous of deriving good from them; and that is that in their very condensed form no time is taken for explanation or expansion. Mr. Ruskin speaks as unto wise men, and asks us to judge for ourselves what he says. But my own experience, after frequent perusal of them, shows me that there is a vast fund of truth in them which becomes apparent only after patient consideration and reflection. Without desiring at all to bestow extravagant praise on my kind friend, or any other distinguished man, it is only fair and just to own that the truth that is in these letters shines out more and more the more closely they are examined. It is a gift that God has given

him, which has cost him far more pain, worry, and vexation, through all kinds of wilful and envious, as well as innocent and unconscious misrepresentation, than ever it has gained him of credit or renown.

This principle leads me to view *now* with approbation what I could not read at first without an unpleasant feeling. The sentence: "Nearly the whole Missionary body (with the hottest Evangelical section of the English Church) is at this moment composed of men who think the Gospel they are to carry to mend the world with, forsooth, is this, 'If any man sin, he hath an Advocate with the Father.'" And when I first read it to my reverend brethren, hard words were spoken of this passage, because in its terseness, in its elliptic form, it easily allows itself to be misunderstood. Yet the paragraph contains the essence of the Gospel expressed with a faithful boldness not often met with in pulpit addresses.

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." We have here a solemn and momentous truth, expressed in few words, as clearly and as briefly as any geometrical definition. But is this *all* the Gospel? Will this

alone "mend the world, forsooth"? Now the extreme men of one particular school in the English Church do really preach little else beside this. When they are entreated to preach upon good works, too, and unfold a little of their value and beauty,—if they have any at all,—the answer is always to the effect, "Oh, of course; faith in Christ must of necessity beget the love of good works. These are the signs of that. Preach Christ crucified, and all the rest will be sure to follow." And this is what is exclusively called "preaching the Gospel." The preacher who teaches us to love our enemies, to live pure lives, to be honourable to all men and women, to bring up our families in the truth, is frowned upon as a "legal preacher." As a clergyman myself, I am not afraid of saying that I look upon this so-called Gospel-preaching as fraught with not a little of danger. God knows, wicked sinners are found in every congregation and class of men, kneeling to pray, and singing praises, exactly like good men. Now I can hardly conceive a style and matter of preaching more calculated to excuse and palliate, and almost encourage sin, than this narrow

and exclusive so-called Gospel-preaching. Neither Christ nor His apostles taught thus at all. The whole Sermon on the Mount is moral in the highest and purest sense. Every epistle has its moral or *legal* side. "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" and I cannot be preaching the Gospel unless, along with the great proclamation, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father," I also do my utmost to teach "what the will of the Lord is" concerning a pure, holy, and blameless life, full of active, good works, done in deep humility and self-abasement; because Christ loved me and died for me, and asks me, in love to Him, to walk in His steps.

On Letter IX

I fancy I can still hear the murmur of angry dissent pass round as I read to my reverend brethren this indignant plea for a higher interpretation of the petition for daily bread than that which passes current with the unthinking, self-indulgent world. Nevertheless, this

manifestation of feeling was not general, and I thoroughly agree with Mr. Ruskin that the world has, from the first, used this prayer thoughtlessly and blasphemously; and probably will continue to do so to the end, when the thoughts and imaginations of all men's hearts shall be revealed, and no more disguises shall be possible; when the masked hypocrite's smile shall be torn from him and reveal the covetousness that breeds in his heart to its core; when the honourable man shall no longer be confounded with thieves, nor the usurer and extortioner be courted and bowed to like an honest man.

The veil that hid the true Christ, as Mr. Ruskin has well remarked, was removed in the breaking of bread with the disciples at Emmaus. As the Master, so the true disciples. They too may be known both by the spiritual breaking of the Bread of Life in the Holy Communion (though the canting hypocrite too may be found polluting that holy rite); but more especially in the union of the sacred ordinance with obedience to the scarcely less sacred command of Christian love and charity to the poor. There may be the

empty profession, but there will be none of the reality of the religion of the Gospel, unless we are partakers of the bread broken at the Lord's Table, or unless we eat the bread earned by the honest labour of our hands or of our brains, or share some of our bread with those, the Lord's brethren, whom He has left for us to care for in His name. The absence of either of these three essential conditions just lays us open to the charge of flaunting before the world a false and spurious Christianity. In the plain words of our friend, our bread not being fairly got or fairly used, is stolen bread.

But I would willingly believe that it is only by a strong figure of speech that we clergy are here again emphatically called upon to act the part of inquisitors by pointedly demanding of every member of our flock a precise account of the manner in which he earns his livelihood. Still, if the answer was not a surprised and indignant stare, I believe the great mass of men would probably be able to give an answer which should abundantly satisfy themselves and us, until Mr. Ruskin threw his own light upon the answer [and

demonstrated that the notions of modern civilized society are not in accordance with the highest teaching. According to our ideas, the artisan, the tradesman, the merchant, the members of the learned and the military and naval professions, all those engaged in the various departments of government work, from the cabinet minister down to the last office clerk,—all these use the labour of body or of mind, and in return receive the necessaries or the luxuries of life for themselves and their households. Men who are, if they please, exempt altogether from such labour, as large landed proprietors, are certainly under a temptation to lead a life of ease and leisure. But it is very seldom that we are offended with the sight of a landlord so unmindful of social duties as to take no personal active interest in the welfare and conduct of his tenants, or forgetful of the responsibilities to his country imposed upon him by his rank and position.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Ruskin does not in all solemn seriousness really expect that after a fair examination of the modes of life of all these people, "an entirely new view of

life and its sacraments will open upon us and them." Is it indeed a fact that "the great mass of men calling themselves Christians do actually live by robbing the poor of their bread, and by no other trade whatsoever"? Mr. Ruskin is always terribly in earnest in whatever he says, and we must look for an explanation of this sentence in the very decided views he holds upon interest of money, which he calls usury.

Mr. Ruskin classes Usury and Interest together. Here are some of his strong words upon this subject: "There is absolutely no debate possible as to what usury is, any more than what adultery is. The Church has only been polluted by indulgence in it since the 16th century. Usury is any kind whatever of interest on loan, and it is the essential modern force of Satan." This was written September 9th of this year. In "Fors Clavigera," Letter lxxxii., p. 323, he challenged the Bishop of Manchester to answer him the question, whether he considered "usury to be a work of the Lord"?* In the same letter, to place his heavy denunciation against the

* See *Contemporary Review*, February 1880.

wickedness of usury in the best possible company, he pleads: "Plato's scheme was impossible even in his own day,—as Bacon's New Atlantis in *his* day,—as Calvin's reform in *his* day,—as Goethe's Academe in his; but of the good there was in all these men, the world gathered what it could find of evil."

Let us look a little closer into this matter. It is not because a man with fearless frankness breasts the full torrent of popular persuasion and universal practice that he is to be thrust aside as a fanatic, with hard words and unfeeling sneers concerning his sanity. Here, again, I avow my persuasion that Mr. Ruskin is, in one sense, too far in advance, and, in another, too far in the rear of the time; and while I attempt an explanatory justification of the modern practice, I admit that it is only "for the hardness of our hearts" and because the golden age is still far off.

The Mosaic law was severe against usury and increase, forbidding it under heavy threatenings among the faithful Israelites, but allowing it in lending to strangers. "If thy brother be waxen poor, then thou shalt relieve him . . . take thou no usury of him, or increase"

(Lev. xxv. 35, 36). "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. *Unto a stranger* thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury" (Deut. xxiii. 19, 20). "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? . . . He that putteth not out his money to usury" (Psalm xv. 1, 5. See Ezek. xviii. 7, etc.) And to come to the Christian law, we have the mild general principle: "If ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. . . . Lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great" (Luke vi. 34, 35).

So far the Law of Moses and the Gospel.

But our Lord, in the Parable of the Talents, appears to actually sanction the practice of loans upon interest: "Thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury" (Matt. xxv. 27). The preceding verse, the 26th, may well be understood to be a question—Didst thou indeed think so? It does not even indirectly attribute

hardness and oppression to our Lord.* I am quite aware that it may be replied that this is an instance of those strong audacious metaphors, where the fact used by way of illustration is instinctively overleaped by the mind of the hearer to arrive at the lesson which it marks and emphasizes; as when the Lord is represented as an unjust judge, or Paul speaks of grafting the wild olive branch upon the good, or James refers to the rust and canker upon gold and silver, or Milton speaks of certain bishops as "blind mouths."† But in all these cases, the hyperbole is manifest; it is an untruth or a disguise, which not only does not deceive, but teaches a great truth. Our Lord's reference to money-lenders or exchangers appears to lend an indirect sanction to a familiar practice.

The Law of Moses, therefore, rebuking the practice of lending for increase among brethren and encouraging it in dealing with strangers,

* The owners of five talents and of two talents are commended for making cent. per cent. of their money; but the man who hid away his one talent, as French peasants do, and brought it to his Lord untouched and undiminished, received a severe rebuke.

† Lycidas. See "Sesame and Lilies," p. 27.

combined with the well-known avarice of the Jews to make them money-lenders on a large scale, and at high rates of interest, to the prodigals and spendthrifts, the bankrupt barons and needy sovereigns of the middle ages. Money was rarely lent for commercial purposes, and to advance the real prosperity of the borrower. It was generally to stave off want for the time; and principal and interest, when pay-day came, had generally to be found in the pastures or strongholds of the enemy. High interest was charged, on account of the extraordinary precariousness of what was called the security. Grinding and grasping undoubtedly the money-lenders would be, from the hardship of their case. Reckless extravagance and lavish profusion were, in those non-commercial ages, highly applauded. The spendthrift and the prodigal was the favourite of the multitude; the rich money-lender was hated and abused, while his money-bags were sought after with all the eagerness of hard-driving poverty. They reviled the careful and economical Israelite; they looked with horror upon his vast accumulations of capital, and never remembered

to thank him for the safety they owed to him from the violent hands of their own soldiers and retainers.

All this went on until the sixteenth or seventeenth century. I have before me a very curious old book, lent to me by Mr. Ruskin, entitled, "The English Usurer: or, Usury Condemned by the most learned and famous Divines of the Church of England. Collected by John Blaxton, Preacher of God's Word at Osmington, in Dorsetshire, 1634."

The language throughout the book is of extreme violence against all manner of usury. The compiler gives a collection of the most emphatic testimonies of the greatest preachers of the day against this "detestable vice." Bishop Jewell calls it "a most filthy trade, a trade which God detesteth, a trade which is the very overthrow of all Christian love." There is, it must be admitted, no sort of argument attempted in the long extract from Bishop Jewell's sermon to demonstrate the wickedness of the practice against which he launches his fierce invectives, but he certainly brings his sermon to a conclusion with a threat of extreme measures "if they continue

therein. I will open their shame and denounce excommunication against them, and publish their names in this place before you all, that you may know them, and abhor them as the plagues and monsters of this world; that if they be past all fear of God, they may yet repent and amend for worldly shame."

This was Bishop Jewell preaching in the middle of the 16th century; and such were the strong terms very generally employed by good and thoughtful men at that day. Bacon (Essay 41) says that one of the objections against usury is that "it is against nature for money to beget money!" Antonio, in "The Merchant of Venice," asks:

> "When did friendship take
> A *breed* of barren metal of his friend?"

And his practice was "neither to lend nor borrow by taking nor giving of excess," which brought upon him the malice and vindictiveness of the Jew—

> "that in low simplicity
> He lends out money gratis, and brings down
> The rate of usance here with us in Venice."

Philip, in Tennyson's "Brook"—a simple man in later times—

> "Could not understand how money breeds,
> Thought it a dead thing."

But there were men, too, who saw that the taking of moderate interest was a blameless act. Calvin was a contemporary of Bishop Jewell, and his mind exhibits a curious mixture of feelings upon the subject. Blaxton triumphantly places a sentence from Calvin's "Epistola de Usura" as a battle-flag in his title-page:—

"In republica bene constituta nemo fænerator tolerabilis est; sed omnino debet e consortio hominum rejici." "An usurer is not tolerable in a well-established Commonwealth, but utterly to be rejected out of the company of men." So again, in his Commentary on Deuteronomy. But again, in a passage quoted from the same author, without reference, in Dugald Stewart's Preliminary Dissertation (Encycl. Brit.) we come across a different view.

"'Money begets not money!'—What does the sea beget? What the house for which I

receive rent? Is silver brought forth from the walls and the roof? But that is produced from land, and that is drawn forth from the sea, which shall produce money; and the convenience of a house is paid for with a stipulated sum. Now if better profit can be derived from the letting out of money than by the letting of an estate, shall a profit be made by letting perhaps some barren land to a farmer, and shall it not be allowed to him who lends a sum of money? He who gets an estate by purchase, shall he not from that money derive an annual profit? Whence then is the merchant's profit? You will say, from his diligence and industry. Does anyone suppose that money ought to lie idle and unprofitable? He who borrows of me is not going to let the loan lie idle. He is not going to draw profit from the money itself, but from the goods bought with it. Those reasonings, therefore, against usury are subtle, and have a certain plausibility; but they fall as soon as they are examined more narrowly. I therefore conclude that we are to judge of usury, not from any particular passage of Scripture, but by the ordinary rules of justice and equity."

To come at once to modern days and practical views. Let us suppose lending on interest forbidden by the Church and the law. Then sums of money required for good and legitimate business purposes must be begged as a great favour. No honourable man would do this. The instinctive repugnance felt by an independent man to place himself under pecuniary obligations which he could not reciprocate would stop many a promising young man of slender means from going to college, many a good man of business from using the most favourable opportunities. I am not speaking of borrowing money to gain temporary relief from pecuniary embarrassment, but of money honourably desired to realize advantages of apparent life-value. So the necessitous would be doomed to remain in hopeless necessity until some benevolently-minded person with a mass of loose unemployed capital came to his rescue, and such men are not to be met with every day.

So far for the man who would like to borrow, but that the law will not allow it except as a free loan or gift. Then for the willing lender, if he dared. He has, say, a few thousands in

hand, which he does not wish to spend. He looks round, if he is anxious to use it for good, for an object of his charity who seems least likely to disappoint him. Does our experience of human nature teach that a sense of gratitude for benefits received is a good security for honourable conduct? Alas! in a multitude of cases—I fear the majority—the lender would only be met with cold and alienated looks when he expected to receive his own again, if indeed he found anywhere at all the object of his kindness. The memory of past ingratitude, the fear of worse to come, would dry the sources of benevolence, and make the upright and honest to suffer equally with the swindler and the hypocrite.

But there is no such fear now. The recognized system of lending upon approved security for a fair and moderate rate of interest removes the irksome, galling sense of obligation, and enables any man to borrow with a feeling that if he receives an obligation he is also conferring one; that if he makes ten per cent. by trading, or a good stipend by his degree, he will divide his profits fairly with the man who served him, and that he

is helping him in his turn to keep his money together for the sake of his children after him. Take away these benefits, and what good is done by free lending? Not any that we can see with ordinary eyes, but a good deal of suspicion, disappointment, ingratitude, and loss.

An honourable man would a hundred times rather accept a loan as a matter of profit to the lender than as a charity to himself. The right result of an honourable system of borrowing and lending with equal advantage to both, *is* the will of God, and not contrary to sanctification. The result of a compulsory system of charitable loans would lead only to the destruction of credit and mutual confidence, and the sacrifice of a multitude of Christian graces and virtues.

We cannot help observing with what vehemence Mr. Ruskin constantly thrusts the thief, the adulterer, and the usurer all into the same boat to be tossed against the breakers of his wrath. Now I would ask some one of those numerous disciples of his, whose affection almost prompts them to say to him, "I will follow thee whithersoever

thou goest," "Pray, my good friend, what is your own practice? Providence has blessed you with ease and affluence far more than you need for daily bread. What do you do with your money? Of course you would never think of investing in consols, in railway shares, or dock-bonds, would you? you would not lend money upon mortgage, or exact rent for your household and landed property? I see that you hesitate a little; you have something to confess. Come! what is it?" And my amiable friend replies, "Oh, but you see all the world is gone after interest of money; all our mutual relations are so intimately bound up with that accursed, abominable practice, that I have no alternative. *I have* large sums lodged in various safe investments, and employ an agent to collect my rents and settle with my tenants." And so I am forced to exclaim, "What! you who are persuaded that usury, and theft, and adultery, are all of equal blackness, if you find that one sin is unavoidable, what about the other two? Would you then invite the robber and the licentious to sin with impunity, as you

practise your own convenient iniquity, with the applause of the world and your own acquiescence?"

Positively I see no escape from this argument. It is the *argumentum ad hominem*, —generally an uncivil mode of address; but here, at any rate, it is impersonally used.

These are my views frankly stated. If I am wrong, even by the highest standard of Christian ethics, I shall be thankful for Mr. Ruskin's corrections.

On Letter X

The letters which I have received up to the present time (October 31st) in reply to Mr. Ruskin's have not failed to bring me not a little of disappointment. On the one hand, I see a man noble and elevated in his aims, and with highest aspirations, desiring nothing so fervently as to see the world and its pastors and teachers rising to the highest attainable level of religious and moral excellence; fearlessly rebuking the evils he sees so clearly;

clothing thoughts that consume him in words that stir our inmost hearts; and yet I see him unavoidably missing his aim as all men are liable to do, through the defect of possessing human language alone as the channel to convey divine meanings; and, moreover, who cannot at every turn stay the course of their reasoning to explain that that which they speak apparently, and from the necessities of language, to *all*, is, as the most ordinary apprehension would perceive, really addressed to *some*.

On the other side, while I hear many expressing their thankfulness that things are now being said that "wanted saying," and are being spoken out with uncompromising boldness, others receive them with impatience, with irritation, with exasperation. I have been gravely advised to recommend Mr. Ruskin to withdraw these letters, to wash my hands of them, etc. Sometimes this arises from unfamiliarity with Mr. Ruskin's most famous works; sometimes from entire unacquaintance with their number and their nature; as when a friend wrote to me before he saw or heard a word of the letters:—

"If Mr. Ruskin thinks we have generally

read his *publication* (*sic*) I think he is mistaken; all I know of *it* is that I have occasionally seen *it* quoted in newspapers, from which I gather that he holds peculiar opinions."

A lady, who looked well to the ways of her household, but knew very little of books, once asked me if Mr. Ruskin had not written a book called the "Old Red Sandstone." I hinted that probably she meant the "Stones of Venice," which was indeed the case. She knew it was something about stones! But she was an excellent creature nevertheless!

These two traits may fairly be paired together.

It should be observed, by clergymen especially who read these letters attentively, that they contain just what we clergy ought to be told sometimes by laymen, to whom we preach with perfect impunity, but who as a rule rarely make reply. I have just read Lord Carnarvon's excellent address on Preaching, delivered at the Winchester Diocesan Conference, and thank him as I thank, and for the same reason that I thank, Mr. Ruskin. We need to be told wholesome though unpalatable truths sometimes, when we have descended

from our castle-pulpits to meet, it may be, the eyes, and hear the voices, of impatient, irritated, and prejudiced critics.

I do not remember that so bold an attack, and yet so friendly, has ever before been made upon our weak points in modern times; and I may justly claim for Mr. Ruskin's letters a calm, self-searching, and, if need be, a self-condemning and self-sacrificing, examination. We are all too apt to cry "Peace, peace, where there is no peace." Why should the shepherds of Britain claim for themselves a more indulgent regard than the shepherds of Israel, whom Ezekiel, by the word of the Lord, addressed in the 33rd and 34th chapters of his prophecy?

Concerning the letter before us on the forgiveness of sins—each other's sins or debts, and our sins before God—it is not a question of theology, but of simple moral right and wrong; and I defy Mr. Ruskin's bitterest censors to deny, that, in this wicked world, men are more in earnest in deceiving, injuring, and swindling their friends than they are in seeking the love of their enemies. Has not our Lord told us long ago that

"the children of this world are wiser" (that is, more earnest, consistent, and thoroughgoing) "in their generation than the children of light"?

It is of extreme difficulty to *understand* the clause, says Mr. Ruskin. Replies some slow-witted preacher: "Where is the difficulty? I both understand it and explain it with perfect ease!" What! understand the precious conditions on which forgiveness will be extended to us! The question of God's forgiveness is not a *simple* question. It is complicated by its relation to men's mutual forgiveness of each other, and that again by the practical difficulty of knowing when we can, and when, from the very nature of the case, we cannot, forgive. Here are surely elements of difficulty quite sufficient to justify the remark that "the clause is one of such difficulty that, to understand it, means almost to know the love of God which passeth knowledge."

But we may, at any rate, guard our people against *misunderstanding* it; and they are guilty, and full of guilt, who live in sin,—sins of avarice, of ill temper, of calumny, of hatred, of sensuality, and of unforgivingness,

and yet daily ask to be forgiven, because, forsooth, they are innocent of any bad intention!

No man or woman who sins with the knowledge that it *is* sin can have God's forgiveness. It is no use to plead the frailty of the flesh. It is wilful, knowing, deliberate sin; and it will not be forgiven without a very living, earnest, and working faith indeed.

I question much whether we preachers of the Gospel say enough upon this point,—not at all that we underrate its importance, nor that we overrate the importance of that which we are apt to call Gospel preaching κατ' ἐξοχήν, namely, the doctrine of the atonement by the Blood of Christ, which is the brightness and glory of the Gospel message, but is no more all of it than that the sum of the Lord's Prayer is contained in one of its clauses.

"As we forgive them that trespass against us." Shall I be pardoned for venturing here upon a remark which seems needful to make in the presence of so much that appears to be erroneous on the subject of human forgiveness? And it is more especially necessary to

be understood in the case of the clergy, because such large demands are made upon their forgiveness as it is impossible to satisfy. I do not at all say that there are trespasses which men cannot forgive,—sins, I mean, of the ordinary type, and not crimes. But I do say that there are times and circumstances under which forgiveness is a moral impossibility. And yet the world expects a clergyman to be ever walking up and down in society with forgiveness on his lips and forgiveness in both his hands. Our Lord said, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and *if he repent*, forgive him" (Luke xvii. 3); and forgiveness is to follow each successive profession of repentance. And in Matt. xviii. 22, though repentance is not named, it is manifestly implied. In 2 Cor. ii. 7, again, sorrow for the sin is a condition of forgiveness. This, then, is the rule and condition of forgiveness, that our brother *repent;* and manifestly it must be so; for the act of forgiveness requires a correlative disposition to seek and receive forgiveness, just as a gift implies not only a giver but a receiver, or it cannot be a gift, do what we

will. I think this is extremely apt to be overlooked even by the larger, that is, the more emotional and impulsive part of the world, though not, of course, by the more thoughtful; and clergymen especially are asked to speak fair, and sue for peace, and all but ask for forgiveness of those who are habitually and obstinately bent upon doing them all the wrong and injury in their power, and using them with the most intolerable harshness.

What, then, does true religion require of us if such circumstances make forgiveness impossible? To be ever ready, ever prepared to forgive; to seek every opening, every avenue to peace without sacrifice of self-respect and manly independence; to watch for opportunities to do kindnesses to the most inveterate enemy,—even where a change of heart appears hopeless. This is possible to a Christian, and this is what Christ demands. But He does not demand impossibilities. He does not ask us to do more than our Heavenly Father Himself, who forgives the returning sinner even "a great way off," if his face be but homeward; but

says nothing of forgiveness to him whose back is towards his home, and whose heart dwells far away.

I am sure Mr. Ruskin does not mean that no clergyman is sensible of the guilt of sins of omission. But he is speaking as a layman, who has heard in his time a great many preachers, and it is very probable indeed that he has not heard many dwell long and forcibly on the fact, which is indeed a fact, that the guilt of sins of omission is the burden of Christ's teaching, and that more parables and more preaching are directed against the sin of doing nothing at all than against the positive and active wickedness of bad men. If we will be candid, we must agree with him that in our general teaching we do lay much less emphasis on such sins than our Lord does in *His* teaching.

But in the paragraph which follows, I confess that, following up a charge which is sadly too true, that there is a grotesque inconsistency "in the willingness of human nature to be taxed with any quantity of sins in the gross, and its resentment at the insinuation of having committed the smallest parcel of

them in detail," there comes a sentence in which the Christian philosopher loses himself in the caustic satirist, and that this vein continues to the end of the letter. In satire, such is its very essence, truth is ever travestied. It is truth still, but the truth in unfamiliar, and, for the most part, unacceptable guise. There is just an undercurrent of truth, and no more, in the statement, not very seriously made, one would suppose, that the English Liturgy was "drawn up with the amiable intention of making religion as pleasant as possible, to a people desirous of saving their souls with no great degree of personal inconvenience."

If the whole naked truth were spoken with the deepest gravity that the awful pressure of our sins demands, the English Liturgy would be a continuous wail of grief and repentance. For if anything is great, and loud, and urgent, it is the cry of our sins. But co-extensive with our sins is the love of our Father; and, therefore, our mourning is changed into rejoicing and thankfulness, and this picture of the sinner "dexterously concealing the manner of his sin from man, and triumphantly

confessing the quantity of it to God," is merely a satire.

The next paragraph is more bitter still; but happily for the cause of sober truth, it is satire again; and nothing can be more obvious than the fact that prayer, to be Common Prayer, cannot at the same time suit every condition of mind, the calm and the agitated, the strained and the relaxed, the rejoicing and the sorrowful. But we are not dependent upon public worship for the satisfaction of our spiritual wants, as long as we can resort to private prayer and family prayer. And, indeed, it requires no wonderful stretch of our powers of adaptation to use the most strenuous private prayer in the midst of the congregation; and the "remorseful publican" and the "timid sinner" are not bound to the words before them, or if they do follow these words, I am sure there is enough depth in them to satisfy the views of the most conscience-stricken. Common Prayer is calm to the calm, and passionate to the passionate. It is all things to all men, just according to their frame of mind at the time.

But alas for my good kind friend! as we

get nearer to the end of the letter, the satire waxes fiercer, and the adherence to the truth of nature grows fainter. Does Mr. Ruskin seriously, or only sarcastically, tell us that the assaults upon the divine power of prayer gain any force from the circumstance that we are constrained to pray daily for forgiveness, never getting so far as to need it no longer? From the first day that we lisped at our mother's knee, "Forgive us our trespasses," until, bowed with age, we *still* say, "Forgive us our trespasses," we have never stood, and never will stand, one day less in need of forgiveness than another day—or our Lord would have provided a thanksgiving and a prayer for the perfected.

I believe everywhere else I recognize, even in the most startling passages, an element of truth. But in the latter half of this letter, not even the large amount of acrimony and severity allowed to the mode of address called satire can quite reconcile us to its marvellous asperity.

On Letter XI

I cannot but feel astonished and grieved at the perversity of those who * persist in looking upon Mr. Ruskin as altogether a noxious kind of a scribbler, and likely to do much injury by the unflagging constancy with which he perseveres in pointing his finger at all our weak and sore places. And yet it cannot be said that even if he does "lade men with burdens grievous to be borne," he himself "touches not the burdens with one of his fingers."

* It was but yesterday that a voice reached me from one of the remotest of our Ultima Thules amongst these mountains, affirming, with something like self-gratulation, that he "cared less than nothing for anything Mr. Ruskin might write outside the subject of Art!" Yet one of the best of our Bishops—and we have many good ones—wrote by the same post: "Mr. Ruskin's letters are full of suggestive thoughts, and must do anyone good, if only in getting one out of the ruts." But, alas! against this I must needs set the dictum of another dignitary of the Church, an intensely practical man: "I have a great reverence for Mr. Ruskin's genius, and for what he has written in time past, and on this account I would rather not say a single word in comment upon these letters;" and again—"I really could not discuss them seriously."

But let us consider this last letter. Is not every word of it true—severely and austerely true,—but still true? But yet here still the fault remains (though I say it with the utmost deference, remembering that, after all, I have infinitely more to learn than I have to teach), the fault remains that the truth is put too keenly, too incisively, to be classed with practical truths.

Yes, the petitions of the Lord's Prayer are for a perfect state in this life. We do pray for a Paradise upon earth, where either temptation shall no longer exist, or where sin shall have lost its power to injure by losing its power to allure. But will the most incessant prayer, individual, combined, or congregational, ever bring us to perfection? Alas! my friend, you would gladly persuade us so; you would lead the way yourself, but that the first half-dozen steps you take would have, or have long ago, proved to you that sin is ever present, even in the best and purest of men.

I trust they are very few indeed who are so easily persuaded by the conceited self-sufficiency of the "scientific people" to cease from prayer under the belief that all things move

on under the control of inflexible laws, which neither prayer nor the will of God, if God has a will, can change or modify. Magee* has a valuable note on the subject of the "Consistency of Prayer with the Divine Immutability," in which he puts this truth in a mathematical form. He says, "The relation of God to man + prayer is different from the relation of God to man — prayer. Yet God remains constant. It is man who is the better or the worse for prayer or no prayer."

It is pleasant to reflect that with the simple-minded Christian the belief in Christ, because he knows that Christ loved him and died for him, is exceedingly little moved by these so-called scientific doubts. The propounders of these entangling questions move in a region where he would feel cold and his life would be crushed out of him, and he declines to follow science at so great a cost, believing besides that science might often be better termed nescience, for he has no faith in such science. Instead of being presented with clear deductions, drawn from observation and experience, he sees but too plainly that, as each

* On the Atonement.

philosopher frames his own belief out of his inner consciousness, there cannot fail to come out a very large variety of beliefs, and that, if the religion of the Bible were exploded and became an obsolete thing, its place would be usurped by a motley crowd of infinitely varied creeds of every shape and hue, each claiming for itself, with more or less modesty and reserve, but with just equal rights, the supremacy over men's consciences. And in the meanwhile, women and children and the poor, and in fact all who are not altogether highly, transcendentally intellectual, must, for want of the requisite faculties and opportunities, do without any religion at all. I suppose most people can see this, and therefore will pay a very limited attention to the claims and pretensions of science-worship.

I come to a sentence where once more the proclivity for satire breaks out for a minute: "But in modern days the first aim of all Christians is to place their children in circumstances where the temptations (which they are apt to call opportunities) may be as great and as many as possible; where the sight and promise of 'all these things' in Satan's gift

may be brilliantly near." I was reading this from the MS. to a mother, accomplished and amiable, who of course thought in a moment of her own little flock of sons and daughters, all the objects of the tenderest care and solicitude; and she felt that she at least had not deserved this stroke. But the truth is that we must read this sentence as we read our Lord's, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. x. 34). The sword was not the object of our Lord's coming, but the unhappy result through sin. He came to bring peace on earth, yet was He "set for the fall of many in Israel." The wisest and best of parents place their sons in the profession or position in life where temptations abound, not because they desire to see them bow before Satan, and become the possessors of "all these things" which he promises "I will give thee," but because there is no position in the active life of the world that is free from temptations; and those temptations are the strongest and most numerous often just where the real and undoubted advantages are the greatest and most numerous. Mr. Ruskin,

with a strong and legitimate figure of speech, is simply putting an inevitable result as the work of apparent design.

If the distinction between the glory and the power of the kingdom of God and the false lustre of earthly power and worldly allurements is not sufficiently dwelt upon in our pulpits, none will regret it more than the earnest preachers in whom the modern Church of England abounds. If it be granted, as I think it must be granted, that the highest wisdom is not always exercised in the choice and preparation of our subjects of preaching, every true-hearted and loyal Churchman must be grateful for the fearless candour of the writer of the letters we have been considering, in pointing out to us our prevailing deficiencies, even if he does not, which is not his province, point out how to attain perfection.

F. A. MALLESON.

LETTERS FROM CLERGY AND LAITY

LETTERS FROM CLERGY AND LAITY

(FROM THE FIRST EDITION)

THE following letters have been entrusted to me for publication in this work. The writers of twenty-two of them are clergymen, of whom sixteen are members of three Clerical Societies, all of whom have read their letters before the Societies to which they belong, except in the case of one Society, where it was impracticable. The remaining six have been kind enough to write in acceptance of the invitation in the *Contemporary Review* for December, 1879. The remaining letters are from members

of the laity, attracted by the same proposal. Many others have been received; but it would not have been possible to include them all in a volume of moderate size, some of them besides being of great length; and I was therefore, with regret, obliged to decline them.

It was not originally intended that the invitation to discuss these questions should be extended to laymen. But several so understood it from the preface in the *Contemporary*, and when I came to examine the letters sent on this understanding, I felt a conviction that a true and safe light would be thrown upon the subject by their assistance; and, using the discretionary power allowed me by Mr. Ruskin, I thought it, on the whole, best to give admission to a certain number of communications from laymen.

Besides, as they themselves are, in

great measure, the subjects of the discussion, and, therefore, must feel a lively interest in it, it seems but fair that they too should have a voice in the matter. Another reason yet had considerable weight with me, that their letters evince a larger and more liberal sympathy with Mr. Ruskin himself than those of some of my clerical brethren, in whose letters there is but too perceptible a degree of irascibility, not unnatural to us, perhaps, in finding ourselves rather sharply lectured by a layman—the shepherds by the sheep. And I hoped that a more fraternal spirit would be promoted by my free acceptance of their ready offer.

The same consenting spirit is all but universal in the notices of the press upon Mr. Ruskin's letters. But I do not wish to anticipate the judgment of "the Church and the world" upon

the whole series of letters here presented. Notwithstanding the peculiar and sometimes rather bewildering effect of a variety of "cross lights," they appear to myself to be invested with singular interest as a faithful reflection of the opinions of the clergy and the laity upon some of the most stirring religious questions of the day.

Moreover, it will, I am sure, please readers who have endeavoured in vain to extract some meaning out of many of the sometimes tedious and unintelligible essayists of the day, to observe that the discussion in this volume at least is carried on in language perfectly clear and within the reach of ordinary understandings. At any rate, I hope it will not be said of any of the writers who have together made up this little volume: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"

Before the sheets are sent to press they will be perused by Mr. Ruskin, who will then use his privilege of replying, thus bringing the volume to a conclusion.

I could not undertake to classify these letters; and have, therefore, as the simplest mode, arranged them in the alphabetical order of the writers' names.

F. A. MALLESON.

From the Rev. CHARLES BIGG, D.D., *Rector of Fenny Compton.*

Mr. Ruskin compares the clergyman with an Alpine guide, whose business it is simply to carry the traveller in safety over rocks and glaciers to the mountain top. He is not to trouble himself or his charge with needless refinements of doctrine. He is not to exaggerate the dignity of his office, or to give himself out as anything but a guide. In particular, he is not to assume anything of a

mediatorial character. He is to preach the Gospel—not of Luther nor of Augustine, but of Christ; in plain words and short terms. He is to proclaim aloud, boldly and constantly, "This is the will of the Lord,"—to apply, that is, the morality of the Gospel, stringently and authoritatively, to the lives of his people. To effect this application with more power, he is to exercise a rigid discipline, and exclude from his congregation all who are not acting up to what he conceives to be the Gospel ideal. He is not to hamper himself with any set and formal Liturgy, which can never be copious or flexible enough to meet the varied needs of a number of men differing widely in knowledge and attainment.

Every one will feel what a crowd of perplexities start up here at every sentence. In what sense is a clergyman like a Chamouni guide? There is a resemblance, no doubt, but not of a kind on which it would be possible to build any argument. It is not the business of the Alpine guide to exercise any supervision over the morals of his employers, or to ask how they earned the money with which he is paid. Again, what is meant by

the Gospel of Christ not according to anybody? It is easy to reject the authority of St. Paul or St. John, or of Luther or Augustine, but there is one commentator whose influence cannot be shaken off, and that is ourselves. And our experience of those who have professed to preach the Gospel pure and simple is not reassuring. Does Mr. Ruskin mean that we are to burn all our theology,—even apparently the Epistles of St. Paul,—and to forget all Church history since the day of the Crucifixion? Does he mean that we are each to set up a theology—a Church of his own? It would be but a poor gain to most of us to exchange the great lamps of famous doctors for the uncertain rushlights of our own imaginations.

Then again, what is this new and more than Genevan discipline that the clergyman is to enforce? He is to take more pains to get wicked rich men to stay out of the church than to persuade wicked poor ones to enter it. After putting his own interpretation upon the Gospel, he is to lay under an interdict all whom his own fire-new formula—for a formula he must still have—excludes. He is

to force, by the method of Procrustes, the visible Church into co-extension with the invisible. No community of Christians has ever attempted such a task. Any zealous (surely over-zealous) parish priest who should so narrow the limits of his fold, who should exclude the "usurer" from the ordinary means of grace, for fear lest he should take God's name in vain by joining in the public prayers, would expose himself, may we not think? to the reproach of being less merciful than He who sends rain on the just and the unjust. Nor, as he looked round upon his carefully-selected congregation, could he easily flatter himself that he was preaching the Gospel "to every creature."

Again, what is the will of the Lord, and what does Mr. Ruskin mean by proclaiming it? That He loves righteousness and hates iniquity we know. The difficulty is in applying this general rule in detail. What is its bearing upon the policy of the Government, upon any particular trade strike, upon the tangled web of good and evil motives which makes up the moral consciousness of an average shopkeeper? I conceive Mr. Ruskin

to be thinking of preachers like Bernard, Savonarola, or Latimer, of denunciations like those of Isaiah, or of our Lord. He seems to mean that the clergyman should stand on a clear mountain summit, looking down over the whole field of life, discerning with the eye of a prophet every movement of evil on a small scale or on a large. There have been such teachers in whose hands science, economy, politics, seemed all to become branches of theology, members of one great body of Divine truth. But not every man's lips are thus touched with the coal from the altar. Many an excellent and most useful preacher would make but wild work if he took to denouncing social movements or the spirit of the age. A singular illustration of the danger that besets these sweeping moral judgments is to be found in Mr. Ruskin's own denunciation of usury, that is, of taking interest for money. Few people will agree either with the particular opinion that every old lady who lives harmlessly on her railway dividends ought to be excommunicated, or with the general principle implied in this opinion, that every prohibition in the Old

Testament is still as valid as ever under social circumstances altogether different.

People who need denouncing do not, as a rule, come to church to be denounced. And it would be a great error to conclude, from our Lord's language to the Pharisees and Sadducees, that the tone in which He addressed the individual sinner was harsh or scathing. The preacher must remember that he is a physician of souls, and the physician's touch is gentle. Think for a moment what worldliness is—how easy it is to say bitter things about it!—and then picture to yourselves a little tradesman with a wife and seven or eight children to keep on his scanty profits. What wonder if he sets too high a value on money? How difficult for him to understand the words which bid him take no thought for the morrow!

There is a time, no doubt, for fierce language, but it does not often come. The preacher is no more exempt than other people from the golden rule to put himself in his neighbour's place, and try to see things with his neighbour's eyes.

Another difficulty arises out of the manner

in which Mr. Ruskin speaks of the relation of his Chamouni guides to dogmatic teaching. They ought not, he says, to be compelled to hold opinions on the subject, say, of the height of the Celestial Mountains, the crevasses which go down quickest to the pit, and other cognate points of science, differing from, or even contrary to, the tenets of the guides of the Church of France.

It is difficult in the extreme to know exactly what is here meant. No doubt it is needless for a guide to drop a plumb-line down every crevasse that he has to cross. It would be great waste of time to lecture his travellers on the laws that regulate the motion of glaciers or the dip of the mountain strata. But what are the doctrines that stand in this relation, or this no-relation, to the spiritual life? Is it meant that all theology should be swept away like a dusty old cobweb?

I would go myself as far as this, that the fewer and simpler the doctrines that a clergyman preaches, the better; that all doctrines should be required to pass the test of reason and conscience, which are also in their degrees Divine revelations, so far, at least, as this, that

no doctrine can be admitted which is demonstrably repugnant to either one or the other. And in the third place, the greatest care should be taken to discriminate matters of faith, real axioms of religion, from pious opinions or venerable practices which have no vital connection with the Christian faith; which, to use Burke's phrase, all understandings do not ratify, and all hearts do not approve. A grave responsibility rests upon those who neglect this discrimination. It is also a point of the highest importance that when most doctrinal a clergyman should be least dogmatic; that he should remember that all doctrine, by the necessity of the case, is cast into an antithetical, more or less paradoxical shape; that he should never lose sight of the harmony and balance between intersecting truths, or of that unfortunate tendency of the human mind to seize upon and appropriate points of difference in their crudest and most antagonistic form, to the exclusion of points of agreement; that he should always do his best to show the reasonableness of the Christian teaching, its analogy and harmony with all the works of God; that where his knowledge fails, he should frankly

confess that it does fail, and not try to eke it out by guesses, or to disguise its insufficiency by rhetoric.

But after all these allowances it remains a fact that the clergyman is not a guide only, but a teacher, an ambassador. He is to teach his people all that he knows about God and His relation to the soul of man. He is to study and meditate himself, and to set forth the conclusion he has reached fully and fearlessly. And if he discharges this duty reasonably and zealously, he need not be afraid of finding that there is a gulf fixed between doctrine and practice. These two must go together. There can be no conduct deserving the name without a philosophy of conduct, and that philosophy is a sound divinity. Even the loftiest and most abstruse doctrines must have an influence upon life. It is a common remark that scientific truth should be pursued for its own sake, and that the most valuable practical results have often followed from investigations carried out with a single eye to the truth. It is an equally common remark that those teach the simplest things best whose range of knowledge and belief is widest.

not indeed inconsistent with that other text which tells us that He is "a consuming fire." But if its meaning is fully imbibed and allowed to bear its natural fruit, it must result in the abandonment of those forensic views of our blessed Lord's atonement, which all the subtlety of Canon Mozley cannot bring into harmony with the dictates of our consciences. If the Father is love, there can be no division, no antithesis between the Father and the Son. If He is love, then the idea of sacrifice, which is of the essence of love, must enter into our conception of the Father also. I say no more about this, because any one who chooses to do so may find the Fatherhood of God, and all that it implies, treated of with great fulness and a marvellous depth of spiritual insight in the letters of Erskine of Linlathen.

It can hardly be doubted that the kind of language which Protestants of a certain class have been, and still are, in the habit of using, about the "Scheme of Redemption," constitutes a most serious stumbling-block in the way of many an earnest spirit. There are few preachers probably, and few congregations now,—in the Establishment at any rate,—who

would not revolt against the hideous calmness with which Jonathan Edwards contemplates the "little spiders" dropping off into the flames. But a great deal of mischief remains to be undone. Those who are acquainted with the biographies of Shelley, of James and of John Stuart Mill, know well what effect the fierce doctrines of Calvinism have produced upon minds which for the issues of morality and, surely, even of religion, were "finely touched." And who can tell what horror and indignation have been wrought in some minds, what agonies of despair in others, who, when at last the blessed work of repentance began to stir within them, and they turned their eyes for comfort to the cross, were met by the terrible warning that none but the select few can call God their Father, and that in all probability their own eternal tortures were decreed before ever they entered the world?

The other point to which I must briefly advert is Mr. Ruskin's protest against the use of words which imply—which leave the least possibility of hoping for—a mechanical absolution, a pardon of sins that have not been abandoned. I do not indeed think that the

reproach of using such language falls upon those who are fond of the title of priests alone, for the doctrines of Calvinism are far more liable to abuse. Nor do I think that any preaching of our clergy on this subject can be said to have "turned our cities into loathsome centres of fornication and covetousness." But here, if anywhere, we ought never to forget the danger of even seeming to set Theology against Reason and Conscience, of allowing the least pretext for thinking that a mere intellectual assent to abstract truths on the one hand, a mere acceptance of ecclesiastical ordinances on the other, can wipe away sins; or that a heart unpurified by charity and obedience, could be at rest even in the kingdom of heaven.

From the Rev. CANON COOPER, *Vicar of Grange-over-Sands.*

Thank God, all good men are broader and better than their creed,—better and broader, I mean, than those parts of their creed which they insist upon most, because they

distinguish them from other people. (These distinguishing points are always of the least importance, in my opinion.) And with my experience of sermons for nearly forty years (for I was very early "called upon to hear sermons"), I am not conscious of such universal omissions on the part of the "priests" of the Church of England as Mr. Ruskin affirms. The universality of the *love* of God the *Father*, embracing even the "*wicked rich*" as well as the "wicked poor," is largely dwelt upon by all "schools."

The kingdom of God *in this present sinful world* is preached and is laboured for. In the present, however, it is more correctly described as the *kingdom of Christ*. When "the end comes," "He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, *even the Father*" (1 Cor. xv. 24, and *seqq.*) As for denouncing the sins of the rich, this is largely done, and especially by "lively young ecclesiastics" in great towns. And as to preaching forgiveness without amendment, no man of common sense can do that; but Mr. Ruskin may say that common sense is rare among the clergy; and some may be afraid to preach morality, because of

an old-fashioned superstition that *morality* is opposed to the *Gospel*. However, I do not hear much of such preaching. As for the duty of every man to do something of the work of the world for his daily bread, that is largely taught; and I believe that the kingdom of God is coming in that respect. A great deal of the drudgery of the world is done by big men now. Also I think that the sinfulness of *omission* is much insisted on by the clergy, as it is abundantly noticed in the Prayer Book, in accordance with the clear teaching of Christ. And the same may be said upon the *personal guilt* of sin. A good clergyman never allows his people to shelter themselves *in a crowd*.

I do not feel the force of the taunt about our saying every week, "There is no health in us," because the most "healthy" Christian finds out always fresh failings as his conscience grows more healthy (not morbidly sensitive), and he is always ready to join in the general confession to his dying day.

There is some value in the remark about Christian parents putting their children into situations where they will be tempted to

worship the devil in order to win the kingdom of the world; but here, as elsewhere, the exaggeration, for the sake of being forcible, is too marked.

From the Rev. HENRY M. FLETCHER.

"Yes," I should say, "it is possible to put the Gospel of Christ into such plain words and short terms as that a plain man may understand it, and plain men do understand it. And it is not left to be gathered out of (any of) the Thirty-nine Articles, which are meant not for simple but for clerkly people.

You seem to have felt it startling that Mr. Ruskin should ask for a simple and comprehensible statement of the Christian Gospel—at least Mr. Ruskin represents the case so. What Christ's ministers are bidden to go into all the world and preach is—the good news that God has reconciled the world unto Himself in Jesus Christ His Son; and that whosoever will accept this Jesus as His Lord and Saviour shall have eternal life through Him. You could not, I think, arrive at a definition

of what the Gospel of Christ is by explaining the terms of the Lord's Prayer.

You must tell first about *Jesus*, our Lord, and what He has done, before child or man can have any proper notion of "the Gospel." The Gospel is a message from "Our Father which is in Heaven," of His love, and of what His love—the love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—has devised and executed for the redemption and glorification (through sanctification) of His rebellious children.

There can be small objection taken to Mr. Ruskin's proposal to make the Lord's Prayer "a foundation of Gospel teaching, as containing what all Christians are agreed upon as first to be taught," if the "Gospel teaching" is understood to be "teaching the truth to *Christians*." But "the Gospel teaching or preaching," which is spoken of by Mr. Ruskin, is "Gospel preaching" to the world not yet Christian, either Jewish or heathen; and the Lord's Prayer cannot properly be taken as a foundation of Gospel teaching to it. It must be told first of Jesus and His work, and must have owned Him "Lord," before it can rightly be taught from *His* prayer. This prayer can

have no *authority* but to those who have become His disciples. Those who are already His disciples learn naturally from Him their relation and their duty to His Father and their Father. St. Paul, in preaching to the Athenians, dwells not on the Fatherhood *of God*, but on the need of repentance as a preparation for the judgment which awaits all. "Jesus and the Resurrection" was what they heard of first from this model preacher.

From the Rev. A. T. DAVIDSON.

MY DEAR SIR,—Permit me to say one thing with regard to the correspondence which has passed between Mr. Ruskin and yourself.

Profitable as it is to listen to Mr. Ruskin, the student of Mr. Maurice's writings will merely find in these remarkable letters an additional plea on behalf of those truths for which Mr. Maurice so bravely and so passionately contended. It is most refreshing to find two such teachers in accord; and probably there will be many who will learn from Mr. Ruskin what they never would have

learnt, or even sought for, from Mr. Maurice. It is, of course, for the truth, and not for his individual statement of it, that Mr. Ruskin, even as Mr. Maurice did, contends. It will, I am sure, be a matter of small moment to him so long as the truth be sought for, whether it be arrived at by means of these letters, or by means of Mr. Maurice's books on "The Lord's Prayer," "The Prayer Book," and "The Commandments."

Believe me, my dear Sir, to be yours faithfully.

From the Rev. EDWARD GEOGHEGAN.

BARDSEA VICARAGE, ULVERSTON.

"Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head."

It is in the spirit which is expressed in these words that I desire to offer the following notes on Mr. Ruskin's Letters. Among the

charges which he brings against the clergy are the following:—

That we have no clear idea of our calling, or of the Gospel of Christ (Letters III. and IV.)

That we profane the name of God in the pulpit (Letter VI.)

That we teach that every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them (Letter VIII.)

That we hold our office to be that, not of showing men how to do their Father's will on earth, but how to get to heaven without doing any of it either here or there (Letter VIII.)

That we neither profess to understand what the will of the Lord is, nor to teach anybody else to do it (Letter VIII.)

That we pretend to absolve the sinner from his punishment, instead of purging him from his sin (Letter VIII.)

That we patronize and encourage all the iniquity of the world by steadily preaching away the penalties of it (Letter VIII.)

That we gather, each into himself, the curious dual power and Janus-faced majesty in mischief of the prophet that prophesies

falsely, and the priest that bears rule by his means (Letter VIII.)

That we do not exercise discipline by keeping wicked people out of church (Letter VI.)

That we do not require each member of our flocks to tell us what they do to earn their dinners (Letter IX.)

That we encourage people in hypocrisy, by inviting them to the authorized mockery of a confession of sin (Letter X.)

I cannot examine the evidence which Mr. Ruskin possesses in support of these charges, as he has not produced it in these Letters. Neither can I attempt to refute the accusations. To prove a negative is always difficult; it becomes an impossible task when the indictment is laid not against any individuals mentioned by name, but against a whole order. I will only observe, that even if all these charges be true, the people of England are not in such evil case as Mr. Ruskin fancies. The laity of England possess the inestimable advantage of not being dependent on the sermons of their clergy for either doctrine, or correction, or instruction in righteousness. Even though a clergyman should never utter

certain doctrines of Christ from the pulpit, or reprove certain sins, he is obliged to do so at the font, at the lectern, and at the altar. Although from the pulpits of the fifty hundreds of clergy whom Mr. Ruskin heard, he never heard so much as *one* clergyman heartily proclaiming that no covetous person, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God, he must have often heard this proclamation from the altar, in the epistle for the third Sunday in Lent, and from the lectern whenever the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians is read for the lesson.

Again, if any clergyman teaches from the pulpit that for the redemption of the world people ought to be thankful, not to the Father, but to the Son (Letter V.), he is obliged to publicly contradict his own teaching as often as he says the General Thanksgiving, and the collects in the Book of Common Prayer.

Again, if any clergyman teaches from the pulpit that any one who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, or that there is any other salvation except a salvation from sin, he is obliged to publicly contradict that teaching

by everything which he says in the church out of the pulpit.

Again, if any clergyman preaches away the penalties of sin (Letter VIII.), he is obliged to publicly contradict his preaching every Ash Wednesday, when he reads the general sentences of God's cursing against impenitent sinners.

Mr. Ruskin asks (Letter III.), "Can this Gospel of Christ be put into such plain words and short terms as that a plain man may understand it?" I answer that the English Church has tried to do this in the Catechism, in which every baptized child is taught in very simple and plain words the gospel, or good news, that God the Father has, in His Son Jesus Christ, adopted him or her into His family, and therein offers him or her the continual help of the Holy Ghost.

Mr. Ruskin complains that the clergy do not teach the people the meaning of the Lord's Prayer (Letter VI.) He must assume that the clergy neglect to teach children the Church Catechism, in which is an answer to the question, "What desirest thou of God in this prayer?" It is an answer which would

probably satisfy Mr. Ruskin. He would see that "Hallowed be Thy name" does not merely mean that people ought to abstain from bad language. And in the explanation of the third commandment, he would see that something more is forbidden than letting out a round oath (Letter VI.)

Mr. Ruskin complains that the clergy do not prevent the entrance among their congregations of persons leading openly wicked lives (Letter VI.) Before this can be charged on the clergy as a sin, he should show that they have power and authority to do this. In the service for Ash Wednesday he will find that the clergy express their desire for a restoration of the godly discipline of the primitive Church, which Mr. Ruskin also desires. But he ought to know that such restoration must be the work not of the clergy only, but of the whole body of the faithful.

Mr. Ruskin insinuates that the clergy have no clear idea of their calling (Letter III.) If this be so, it is certainly not the fault of the Church, seeing that the nature of the calling of a clergyman is plainly set forth in the

Offices for the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. But if one may form an opinion from many published sermons by English clergymen of various schools of thought, and from their speeches in Church Congresses and elsewhere, and from their pastoral work as parish priests, I should be inclined to think that they are not quite so ignorant of the nature of their calling and of the Gospel of Christ as Mr. Ruskin supposes them to be, and that of some of the sins, negligences, and ignorances which, in these Letters, he lays to their charge, they may plead not guilty, or at least not proven by Mr. Ruskin.

BARDSEA, ULVERSTON,
November 3rd, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I thank you for your letter, which I received this morning. Second thoughts are not always the best. Your own first thought about the motto which I prefixed to my notes was right; your second thought was wrong. It never occurred to me that anyone could possibly suppose that that motto was by me intended to be applied to

myself, inasmuch as in these notes there is no "wound" inflicted on Mr. Ruskin, or even any "rebuke." On the contrary, I assume that he has evidence in support of his charges, although he has not produced it. The "rebuke" to which I alluded was *Mr. Ruskin's* rebuke. *He* is the "friend" whose wounds are faithful, and whose smitings are a kindness. For I have not the least doubt of his good-will towards the clergy, or of his earnest desire to see them all performing their sacred duties with zeal and knowledge. And it was as my acknowledgment of this that I prefixed the motto. With you I firmly believe that the standard which he takes is "lofty and Christian," and that it is one towards which we ought all of us to aim. The object of my notes was to show that the laity of England have, in the authorized teaching of the Church, a sufficient safeguard against any erroneous teaching which they may possibly hear from the pulpit or in the private ministrations of the clergy, and also a supplement to any defective teaching.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD GEOGHEGAN.

From JOSEPH GILBURT, Esq.

Christmas Day, 1879.

The words "Thy will be done" are generally coupled with resignation, and very often with patience under chastisement. It is always to us a sad-coloured sentence, and a sentimental illuminator of the Lord's Prayer would in all probability make it so. Now, if we think for a moment what the state of things would be if the will of the Lord were done, we shall see it should be the brightest sentence we could conceive. God's will is our weal. Aspiration, not resignation, is the characteristic of its doing. There would certainly be no death,—that is decidedly contrary to His will; and by-and-by, when His will is done, there will be none. For the present, while His will is not yet done, we have the sure and certain hope that death will be—nay, is—conquered by anticipation.

If His will were done, all beautiful things would flourish, and all minds would answeringly rejoice in them.

Our men of the piercing eye—Turners,

Hunts, Ruskins, etc.—show us, till we almost worship the state of things in cloud and mountain, river and sea, in hedgerow and wayside, even in cathedral and campanile, where God's will is done, and we are enchanted with their beauty. It is God's will that stones should be laid truly and carven well, and aptly described. And our men of the probe and the lens, the scientific openers of nature's secrets, are daily demonstrating new beauties in which the will of the Lord is done in the formation of bodies and working of forces. It is mere truism to add to this that the will of the Lord being done, none of the ills that are all of them indirectly or directly the result of not doing it could occur, and resignation would have no scope for exercise. There was One who always did it, and He for three years made sundry parts of Palestine a heaven,—with what results a many quondam poor folk testified. This leads me to say that I like to look upon the word heaven as a participle instead of a noun, as the state of being heaved or raised, rather than a place: and for this reason. The experience of every one of us suffices to prove that we are never so *heaven*, or raised

in true happiness, moral dignity, and worth, as when we are in the company of one greater, wiser, or better than ourselves. Those who lead a humdrum life among mean persons, can testify what a heaven it is to be transplanted for ever so short a time to the company of a great and good man. Now the culminating, indeed all-absorbing, attraction of the heaven we all look to, is the presence and the companionship of the greatest and best; and the experience of ourselves tallies with the promise of St. John that it will have the effect of making us "like Him," when "we shall see Him as He is." Surely being *heaven*, or raised like that, is superior to any Mahomet's paradise that we can invent or distil out of the poetical parts of the Scriptures.

From the Rev. ARCHER GURNEY.

Mr. Ruskin's view as to the duty of basing all upon the Father's love is essentially sound and orthodox; and he is also right in bidding all men lead self-denying lives,—in this sense,

that they should give up time and labour to the endeavour to help their brethren; but he fails utterly, hopelessly, to realize the Incarnation and its glorious consequences, how all human life and love,—how art, science, knowledge, enjoyment, are sanctified by God's becoming man; sharing this human life of ours,—not to trample upon it as an unholy thing, but to consecrate it to God's service. Such is our call. We must enjoy the beautiful to vindicate enjoyment. We do not please God by casting all His choicest gifts away. To give all we have to feed the poor is the way to make men poor, and is false charity. Use rather the mammon of this world to God's honour and glory, and when ye fail, the good works that you have done shall plead for your entrance into everlasting habitations; for the way to clothe the naked and feed the hungry, permanently, is to teach men and women to help themselves, and to find employment and reward for the exercise of their powers and energies.

From the Rev. J. H. A. GIBSON, *Brighton.*

To Mr. Ruskin, then, asking us to define ourselves as a body, I reply, We are presbyters and deacons, deriving our authority from the episcopate, who themselves form links in that spiritual chain which binds both ourselves and them, by perpetual succession, in one communion and fellowship, with the Apostles, and to whom has been committed the office of consecrating and sending forth labourers to work in the Lord's vineyard.

But Mr. Ruskin proceeds, "And our business as such." Our business as such! Well, if we have in any satisfactory manner proved our first point—*that* is, the authority with which we act—we may fairly say to Mr. Ruskin, "Do you put this question, 'What is your business?' to your lawyer or doctor?" Does he ask the same question of the clergy of any other portion of the Catholic Church? We shall not wish to insult Mr. Ruskin by attempting to explain to him the duties of the priesthood, with which, doubtless, he is well acquainted.

But he asks, "Do we look upon ourselves

as attached to any particular State, and bound to the promulgation of any particular tenets?" We are undoubtedly attached to the particular sphere to the which we are sent by those whose office is to provide the various parts of God's vineyard with labourers. The Anglican Church is the legitimate representative of the Catholic Church of Christ in England; and we, as clergy of this Church, minister for the most part to our countrymen at home, and only in other countries as the necessities of our colonists and others may require. And, as subscribers to the Prayer Book and priests of the Church of England, we are certainly bound to teach faithfully and honestly her doctrines, neither adding to them nor taking away from them according to our own individual idiosyncrasies.

From the Rev. CANON GRAY.

WOLSINGHAM, *October 13th*, 1879.

MY DEAR PENRHYN,—Will you please to thank Mr. Malleson on my behalf for the Letters on the Lord's Prayer? I have ever

admired Ruskin, and learn much even when I most differ from him. But if I had the good fortune to be with you to-morrow, I fear that I should constantly be demurring to his teaching,—*e.g.* (Letter III.) his supposition that the Thirty-nine Articles were meant to include a summary of the Gospel; (Letter V.) his belief that there is need now to warn men against being thankful not to the Father but only to the Son,—a remnant of the teaching of his youth; (p. 20) his hard way of speaking as to the Son of Man, Whose human soul, as that of perfect man, received its knowledge in steps according to His own will as perfect God; (Letter VII.) his confused distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Christ (see Eph. v. 5 in the Greek, and remember "*tradendo tenet*" on 1 Cor. xv. 24); his belief that because no one knoweth the hour of Christ's coming, it cannot be hastened by prayer; (Letter VIII.) his seeming identification of claiming interest from a poor man who is in need and necessity, and from a railway company who borrow money to make more,—speaking, as far as I can see, of money as if it had no market value like other things;

(Letter X.) the belief that we clergy are not awake to the guilt of sins of omission; (Letter X.) the inability to see that the nearer and nearer by God's grace we come, in answer to prayer, to purity and holiness, the more we *realize* our distance from them; and that his objection to our Liturgy might be adapted into one against the Lord's Prayer, in which we pray daily for forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil, showing that we never shall be so delivered as no longer to need forgiveness; (Letter XI.) the supposition that any one state of life is necessarily more full of temptations than another, as though the fruit of a tree were not to Eve what the glory of the world was to the Son of Man, at least in the eye of the Tempter.

I am ashamed to jot down thus obscurely the points on which I should have liked to speak, and I know that our brethren can fully deal with them. On the other hand (Letter VIII.) there is much to move us, and lead to searchings of heart. As to the timidity and coldness with which the Church is attacking the crying sins of our day, one often feels how we need some among us to speak as the

prophets did to the men of their generation, and we may be thankful to have our shortcomings brought home to us by words like Ruskin's.

I wish I were not writing so hurriedly.

Remember me most affectionately to all my old and true friends who are with you tomorrow.

[NOTE.—*March 12th*, 1880:—

Mr. Malleson has kindly brought this letter of mine again before me. Hasty and concise as it was, I have no wish to expand it, as Mr. Ruskin's Letters are now *publici juris*, and in the hands of many a critic, who will rejoice to deal with them according to his wisdom. I should be thankful, however, for leave to add a few words on one point. I cannot help having misgivings as to whether I was right in demurring without hesitation to "the supposition that one state of life is necessarily more free from temptations than another," for I well know that in favour of such a supposition there is a strong *consensus* of just men. I am, however, one of those who believe that the shorter Beatitude, "Blessed be ye poor,"

(Luke vi. 20) is explained by the longer, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." I see, also, that the difficulty with which "they that have riches" enter the kingdom of God is reasserted with a qualification in the very next verse, which speaks of those "who trust in riches" (St. Mark x. 23, 24). "Who then can be saved?" asked the disciples, who, poor men indeed themselves, first heard of this difficulty, instinctively perceiving, it may be, that it has its root in temptations from which in one shape or other no one is free. I read that "the cares of this world," as well as "the deceitfulness of riches," choke the Word; and I am sure that into the number of those "who will be rich," or "who are wishing to be rich," and so "fall into temptation," a poor man may but too easily find his way. I like to remember that when "the beggar died," he was carried into the bosom of one who had been "very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold;" and I think that very deep and far-stretching may be the meaning of the words of the wise man, "The rich and poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all."]

From the Rev. H. N. GRIMLEY, *Norton Rectory, Bury St. Edmunds.*

Mr. Ruskin's Letters have already been closely scrutinized. What have seemed to be blemishes in them have been commented on. They have been spoken of as somewhat random utterances—as utterances such as are pardonable in a layman, but would be inexcusable in a clergyman who should endeavour to instruct his brethren. It has been said of them that they manifest a want of knowledge of teaching constantly being given from Church of England pulpits. It would be quite possible for the present paper to be devoted to a continuation of the like free criticism of the Letters. I might ask, for instance, whether Mr. Ruskin, after (in Letter V.) speaking with condemnation of a plan of salvation which sets forth the Divine Son as appeasing the wrath of the Father in heaven, does not himself give expression to words, as to the love of the Father, which almost imply that in his estimation the Divine mind is not in unity in itself? I might further ask for Mr. Ruskin to put more definiteness into his remarks on

usury, and to particularize the special forms of that condemnable practice which the clergy should boldly denounce. The few hints which he throws out on this subject show that to his own thoughts there is present an exalted socialism. He himself in previous writings, while shadowing forth a social system based on unselfishness, has carefully deprecated any revolutionary attempt to hasten the establishment of such a system, and would prefer that it should be waited for while it quietly and with orderliness evolves itself out of the present imperfect order of things. Is it not so evolving itself? Does not the co-operative movement, now steadily advancing, spring out of the recognition of the fact that mutual welfare is a far more excellent thing to be attained than the enrichment of the few at the expense of the many? And if, with regard to the land question, any readjustment of relations is made, will it not be made in the light of the same beneficent principle? If, however, the clergy were to give heed to Mr. Ruskin's words, and at once proceed to the indiscriminate excommunication of usurers, would they not be initiating a social revolution, altogether

different from that orderly upgrowth of a better state of things which has commended itself aforetime to Mr. Ruskin himself? My own impression is that I shall be giving voice to a wish that will spring up wherever Mr. Ruskin's Letters may be read, if I say that a clearer, more definite utterance on the usury question would be welcomed. The clergy everywhere would receive with thankfulness any hints as to how they might hasten the coming of the day when the Church of Christ will no longer embrace within her borders the few, with a useless excess of wealth, and around them the unhappy many, hopelessly, squalidly destitute; along, too, with a vast number of toiling teachers, clergy, artists, and literary workers, living mostly on the verge of pennilessness—men of whose existence Mr. Ruskin has, in earlier writings, expressed himself as keenly and sympathetically conscious.

But I will not linger on such parts of Mr. Ruskin's Letters as may seem to display inconsistency, or to need more precision of language before they can be practically useful. I will proceed to speak of those for which, as

it seems to me, the clergy may unhesitatingly be very grateful to Mr. Ruskin for laying them before them.

And first, I think we cannot be other than thankful to Mr. Ruskin for sounding at the outset a note of catholicity. He asks the clergy of the English Church (let me say he asks us,—he asks you and me), whether we look upon ourselves as the clergy of a mere insular Church, or as the clergy of the Church Universal. Is the teaching we are continually giving utterance to as to the conduct of life in harmony with, or different from, the teaching of the Christian Churches on the Continent of Europe? Mr. Ruskin's tone, in asking these questions, is such as implies that it would be no satisfaction to him to hear from us that we rejoice in considering ourselves as severed from the clergy of the Christian Church abroad. Indeed, he goes on to assume that we, with one consenting voice, admit our fellowship with the rest of Christendom—that we recognize as our brothers the clergy of the Church of France, and of the Church of Italy, and of the Church everywhere.

Mr. Ruskin thus does not lend the support

of his name to any useless Protestantism. There are senses in which the whole Christian Church must ever be a Protestant Church, and in which even individual members may from time to time raise protesting voices. The Church must ever lift up her protest against all influences that work in the world for evil—against whatsoever tends to overthrow the Christian ideals of individual, family, social, national, and international life. She must protest against all hindrances, even though they may spring up within her own borders, which tend to prevent her from putting any beneficent impress upon human handiwork and upon manifestations of human genius. She must protest against the very Protestantism in her midst which has served to paganize art and to demoralize the drama, by banishing both to an outer region of darkness which Gospel rays cannot be expected to illumine. She must protest vigorously against the mischievous Protestantism which impoverishes the intellect and chills the affections, by causing men to devote the whole energies of their lives to protesting against systems of thought with which they are very

imperfectly acquainted, and to maintaining an attitude of perpetual suspicion as to others' aims and motives. Under the influence of such Protestantism as this, many have been possessed with the assurance that a vast number of the clergy of Christendom live for no other end than to conspire against freedom, to disseminate falsities, and to work ruin amongst human souls. This Protestantism is fast ceasing to have any power amongst us; still, as it is not quite extinct, it is comforting to find that Mr. Ruskin does not attribute it to the main body of those whom he addresses.

To me it seems that an habitual protesting attitude on the part of those who are called upon to be the teachers of the Church implies that they have not themselves properly entered the temple of Christian truth. He to whom Christian doctrine has revealed itself in all its wondrous harmony cannot do other than devote himself to unfolding to others what is ever present to his own mind, so that he may aid in building up their thoughts consistently and symmetrically, and thus help to establish them firmly in the Christian faith.

We may, then, it seems to me, express our

thankfulness that Mr. Ruskin has spoken, though ever so briefly, a word of encouragement to the clergy of the English Church amongst whom the thought of a future of reunion for Christendom has been welcomed. Mr. Ruskin is familiar with the practical working of the Christian Church in Italy and elsewhere on the Continent, and seeing, as he has seen, that her influence is exerted towards securing an orderly and healthy state of social life, he does not give circulation to the indiscriminate calumnies which were once wont to be uttered, and which were alike at variance with the truth and provocative of a mischievous severance of Christians from one another.

But we must, I think, be more especially grateful to Mr. Ruskin for his calling widespread attention to the great Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. There is especial need for this being uplifted before the thoughts of men at the present day, and it is being so uplifted. The more it is upheld, the more fully will it be discerned. It cannot be said that the doctrine is not accepted within the English Church. Still, it has not yet been received in all its fulness. Amongst the

separatists outside the borders of our Church, the doctrine that God is the Father of all humanity, and the loving Father too, is rejected in two extreme ways. The set of "believers" who adopt the one extreme view consider that the Lord's Prayer—so luminous, as Mr. Ruskin reminds us, with the thought of God's fatherly love—should be used only by the elect, such as themselves, and that all others have no right to address God as their Father. The other set of so-called "believers" considers with a deplorable Pharisaism that they have arrived at such a stage of perfection as to be beyond the need for using words which require them to ask every day for forgiveness of their trespasses. Why should they ask for such, they say, when their trespasses are non-existent? If they are children of the Father they are not so in the same sense as those who conscientiously use the prayer addressed to the Father in heaven. I regret that Mr. Ruskin's facile pen has betrayed him into writing some words with reference to our Liturgy which bring him momentarily into sympathy with these self-righteous ones who

have no need to confess that they want more health of soul.

But the doctrine of the loving Fatherhood of God, as revealed to us in Christ, is one that is unfolding itself more and more clearly to the Christian world. If it has unfolded itself to us we may aid in its increased discernment. It is one that involves the acceptance of the thought that all human life and every sphere of human endeavour are under Divine patronage. God is in every way our Father. All human excellences whatsoever exist in their fulness and perfection in Him. As they are manifested in us and in our brothers and sisters around us, they are Divine excellences becoming incarnate on the realm of humanity.

Childhood, for instance, as it manifests its sweetness and winsomeness in Christian homes, is an outcome of the eternal childhood which dwells in God, and which was manifested supremely to the world in the life of the Divine Child at Bethlehem and Nazareth.

So that the doctrine of the loving Fatherhood of God has sheltering beneath it the thought of the divineness of childhood. Clustering

with it are many kindred thoughts. There is the divineness of youth, the frankness of Christian boyhood, the tender grace of Christian girlhood,—these are manifestations of the eternal youth abiding in the Divine Lord of humanity.

I might speak to you in like manner of the divineness of manhood and of womanhood, and of the divineness of old age. All womanly excellences, as well as all manly virtues, reside in the Divine One. I might speak to you of the divineness of wedded life, the divineness of Christian fatherliness and motherliness. The divineness of the student's life and of the teacher's life might also be dwelt upon. The divineness of the ministry of reconciliation, in which ministry all may take part who help others to separate themselves from sin and selfishness and to enter into union with God and His life of love,—this I present to you as a fruitful thought. The divineness of all efforts tending towards the solace and comforting of suffering human souls,—that too is one of the beneficent thoughts involved in the great Christian truth that God is the Father of humanity.

But the same great truth leads us to the discernment of other useful thoughts. I might speak of them as connected with the divineness of all toil which has for its object the increase of human knowledge, the gathering together of the stored-up lessons of the past, the beautifying of the daily life, the refining and spiritualizing of the daily thoughts of the great brotherhood and sisterhood. It would thus be quite justifiable to speak of the divineness of scientific toil, inasmuch as that has for its aim the unfolding of the thoughts of God, of which all appearances of the material world are the outcome and manifestation. Thus too I might speak of the divineness of the work of those who enable us to see the results of the Divine guidance bestowed on the world in the ages past. I might speak of the divineness of the work of the artist who devotes himself to acquiring skill in subtly entangling in the colours he puts on canvas the sentiment underlying the landscape he reverently looks at, which to him is a manifestation of a heaven of beauty unseen by heedless eyes. I might also speak of the divineness of the labours of the Christian poet, who presents

to the world truth in its feminine and most winning aspects.

When I should have spoken of all these things they could all be summed up into one phrase—the divineness of Humanity. And this is what I have faintly attempted to show necessarily springs up for recognition as the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God presents itself to us in all its impressiveness.

I must hasten to a close. I have said that Mr. Ruskin in what he asks us with reference to our relation to the Church in other countries sounds a note of catholicity. In what I have myself said as to Protestantism I have urged nothing inconsistent with a thorough loyalty to the principle of Christian individualism. But individualism in utter revolt against authority leads only to confusion and to a multiplicity of tyrannies. Individualism thrives best under the protection of a generous all-embracing authority. Individualism before taking up the attitude of revolt should consider that it, by brave patience and a reverent submissiveness to all higher influences around it, may contribute beneficently to the authority of the future,

and increase the generousness and catholicity of its sway.

I will further remark that Mr. Ruskin's words as to the Fatherhood of God are also a catholic utterance. For the Fatherhood of God when pondered upon helps us to see that no sphere of human effort is beyond His control; that His house is one of many mansions of thought and affection and loving toil; that His heavenly kingdom is one including all domains on which human energies can be directed, over which human thoughts can roam, on which human love can lavish itself.

From the Rev. CANON E. H. M'NEILE, *Liverpool.*

What is the exact question asked in Letter II.?

Is it whether the clergy are or are not teachers of universal science?

If so, we answer, Yes, we are teachers of the science most universal of all, namely, the knowledge of God, which is eternal life: and of the way to attain it, which is holiness; and the principles of this science, which are universal,

are not, as in other sciences, discovered by human research, but are revealed by God.

Does the question imply that there are points of science on which it is of no consequence what opinions a teacher holds? And if so, does it further mean that all matters of doctrine, such as are defined in the Thirty-nine Articles, are of this nature?

If so, I answer that it is only the theories or speculations of scientific investigators about which variety of opinion is immaterial, not the essential principles of the science; and that we cannot exclude all questions of doctrine from among those principles. I do not know what is meant by holding different opinions on points of science. About the facts of science there can be no difference of opinion; but there may be about the bearings, and the inferences to be drawn from them.

LETTER III

Here is a definite question. My answer is, Yes, but we do not refer to the Thirty-nine Articles for a statement of the Gospel, but

rather to the Apostles' Creed, which contains the simplest summary of the facts on which the Gospel rests. (See 1 Cor. xv. 1, etc.)

Letter IV

Here I answer, No. The Lord's Prayer was not intended to be a statement of the Gospel, but the language of those who have accepted it. No doubt the terms of the prayer may be so explained as to bring in a definition of the Gospel, working backwards; but a complete explanation would be longer than the Thirty-nine Articles. There seems to be a serious confusion of thought here between the offer of salvation to sinners estranged from God, and the utterance towards God of His reconciled children.

Letter V

The Lord's Prayer is elementary teaching for Christians, but it is not the first thing to be taught to those outside the family of God.

The truth that we have a Father in heaven is a fundamental part of the Gospel. It is assumed in the Lord's Prayer; and so is the further truth that our Father of His tender love towards us has given His Son to die for us, that we may be delivered from the "consuming fire" which sin, not God, has kindled; and thus we have indeed a blessed scheme of pardon for which we are to be thankful to *both* the Father and the Son. This makes *all* the clauses of the apostolic blessing intelligible and living.

Letter VI

Page ~~14~~ 16: "For *other* sins," etc. I think this is an incorrect comment. The force of the threat is positive, not comparative. The language of the law is similar towards every sin.

In what is said about the abomination of hypocrisy in prayer we cordially agree. God give us grace to avoid it ourselves, and to warn our brethren faithfully against it! But in what follows there is an assumption of a power of discipline which the clergy do not

possess, and which I fear the laity would be most unwilling to concede to them. Mr. Ruskin seems also to slip into the old error of the servants in the parable of the tares.

Letter VII

On page 21 St. John xiv. 9 is incorrectly cited, and it is difficult to know the exact drift of the writer.

I object to the statement that "in all His relations to us and commands to us," etc. (See, *e.g.*, St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20.)

As to His not knowing whether His prayer could be heard, see St. John xi. 41, 42.

I think it is incorrect to say that our Lord Himself *used* the prayer He gave us, at least in its entirety as it stands.

Pages 20, 21 : Mr. Ruskin seems to me to draw most strongly the very comparison to which he objects. Surely the kingdom of Christ *is* the kingdom of His Father. (Rev. xi. 15, xii. 10; Eph. v. 5.) Does not an unwillingness to accept the true divinity of our Lord underlie this passage ?

Letter VIII

Page 25: There is surely a mistake here. Personal sanctification and national prosperity are very different things. A nation has no existence except in this world; therefore its prosperity is the chief end to be aimed at; and this is no doubt promoted by the holiness of its people. But a man has another life hereafter; and comfort and wealth are not the end of his being. If granted, they are means to his sanctification, not *vice versâ*.

It seems to me that Mr. Ruskin in this Letter writes somewhat recklessly, and that he must have been singularly unfortunate in his experience of preachers if he has never heard a faithful sermon against covetousness, which is the idolatry of our age. On page 26 he seems to fall into a great error in supposing that the proclamation of a free pardon for sin tends to encourage it. If a man is to be delivered from the power of his sins, he must first be delivered from the guilt of them.

No doubt the grace of God has been abused

by some; and St. Paul himself felt that his doctrine was open to such abuse (Rom. vi. 1, 15). It is not, I think, just to attribute the corruption of our great cities to the teaching of the clergy. It is rather to be ascribed to the absence of that teaching.

LETTER X

Whatever justice there may be (and no doubt there is much) in Mr. Ruskin's accusations against us clergy, he is surely under an entire misapprehension in the charge which he here makes against our Liturgy.

Our Prayer Book is doubtless constructed for the use of believing Christians, and is not fitted for the impenitent; but its adaptation to the needs of the repentant publican and of the advanced Christian is most wonderful. And that a form of prayer may be so adapted is surely proved by the Lord's Prayer itself, which Mr. Ruskin says is the *first* thing to be taught to all, and which, with all his practice in thinking, he feels that he cannot adequately expound.

Surely the repetition of a confession of unholiness casts no slur upon the efficacy of our prayers for holiness when we recognize that holiness is progressive, and that spiritual growth may express itself not merely in new words, but in a heartier utterance of the old ones. As to the particular expression, "there is no health in us," it needs either the explanation of St. Paul—"I know that in me, *that is, in my flesh*, dwelleth no good thing,"—or else to be understood according to the old meaning of "health," viz., "*saving health*," *salvation, deliverance* (Psalm cxix. 123, Prayer Book; Isa. lviii. 8; Jer. viii. 15).

It needs further to be remarked that repentance is not only a single definite act, but a state of mind.

I think that underlying all these comments of Mr. Ruskin on the Lord's Prayer is a failure to recognize the truth of man's fall.

Human nature is a ruin, not to be restored by a rearrangement of its fragments. God has provided a remedy, by sending His Son to be the foundation of a new spiritual building; and every man who is to be built upon

that foundation must himself become a new creature by the operation of the Holy Ghost. All efforts to improve humanity in the mass, without the renewal of each separate soul, must fail; and no doubt the clergy often fall into this mistake.

The Lord's Prayer is not the prayer of all mankind as they are by nature. It is a prayer to the possession of which they are brought by regeneration, and to the enjoyment by conversion.

E. H. M'NEILE.

From the Rev. P. T. OUVRY.

On the meaning of usury, I would add a few words. I start with this proposition. There is nothing contrary to the will of God for one free man to buy from another free man anything he wants. I have two houses, —one I live in, one I let. My tenant pays the market rent of houses to me, and so both parties are benefited. I have two thousand pounds. I have no capacity, or opportunity, or desire to use more than one thousand pounds in trade on my own account. My

neighbour has energy and activity to use more money than he has in trade. He gladly offers me five per cent. for my spare thousand pounds. I willingly lend it on those terms. He makes ten per cent. by using it. He gives me five pounds and has five pounds for himself. If this be usury, it is lawful and right.

A number of small cultivators of land have no capital. A money-lender supplies what they require on condition that they sell their crops to him at a price which he is able to fix. From the circumstances of the case the money-lender makes an enormous profit. The cultivator has barely the necessaries of life. This is usury, in the bad sense of the term, but is more correctly called oppression or extortion.

Again, a man lends money to ignorant inexperienced youths, on promise of repayment when they come of age. This, too, is oppression or extortion.

Similar oppression is witnessed when bad houses are let to poor people at high rents.

It is not, then, that usury, in the sense of oppression or extortion, is inherent in

money-lending; but it belongs equally to every transaction between man and man, where any unrighteous dealing is practised.

P. T. OUVRY.

GRANGE-OVER-SANDS,
October 1st, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I protested strongly yesterday against our remarks, made on the spur of the moment, being printed and submitted to Mr. Ruskin's criticism, and what I said then I feel as strongly still.

But I have no objection to send, as a comment on his Letters, a volume of sermons which I published last year, because I think that, in that upon the hallowing of God's name, I have not taken the restricted view which Mr. Ruskin accused the clergy of taking, and I think also that (except in the sermon upon the doctrine of the Trinity, which was written before the others, and is tinged with the prejudices of early training), I have set forth God the Father as a Being of infinite, tender, fatherly love.

So far as snails may follow in the footsteps

of greyhounds, and bats look in the same direction as eagles, I think some of us clergymen are getting our feet and our eyes into the same track as Mr. Ruskin's.

It seems to me that all of us who think upon religious matters, laity or clergy, whether men of genius or commonplace people, are feeling our way at present to something better and truer. Men like Mr. Ruskin, like steamships, dart on to their destination; and feebler minds, like sailing vessels, are a good deal at the mercy of the *popularis aura* and the winds of doctrine, but both are on their way to the same point.

I send the volume by the same post as this letter.

Yours very faithfully,

H. R. S.

From the Rev. A. G. K. Simpson, *Brighton.*

We are convinced that the love of God is the originating cause of all His dealings with mankind, and are glad to meet him on the broad platform of "Our Father which art in heaven;" only premising that it is a platform

not new to us, but on which we have long taken our stand.

But beyond these somewhat general statements of our faith, I doubt whether it would be possible to put Divine truth into such plain words as would meet with general acceptance. In proportion to the *minuteness* would be the *disagreement.* To take one great truth (perhaps the greatest of all), would it be possible to put forth a plain and simple statement, such as all, or the majority, would receive, of the Atonement? Such a mind as Mr. Ruskin's would not be content with the forensic view more popular some years ago than now. Wiser, it seems to me, it is to accept some such teaching as that of Coleridge in "Aids to Reflection." "The mysterious act, the operative cause," he says, "is transcendent." "*Factum est,*" and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the fact, it can be characterized only by its consequences. It is these consequences which (according to Coleridge) are illustrated by the four metaphors:—

1. Sin-offering or expiation.
2. Reconciliation.

3. Redemption.

4. Payment of a debt.

Now, would not a plain, a simple statement, be apt to press the metaphor too far, and attempt to put into words one aspect of the truth as though it were the whole? Such a reverent mind as Bishop Butler's reproved the curiosity which sought to find out the manner of the atonement. "I do not find," he said, "that it is declared in the Scriptures." And yet the atonement is only *one*, though perhaps the *chief*, of the many points of which a true and simple statement must take cognizance. It would be comparatively easy for the private clergyman to put into words his thoughts on this subject or that, but then he would be continually liable to have it urged against him that he had not sufficiently considered some given point—had not walked round it, and seen it in all its bearings; that his view was inadequate and incomplete; and, being fallible and human, some of the objections would doubtless be true, and the simple and plain statement be, in that respect at least, misguiding.

From the Rev. G. W. WALL, *Bickerstaffe.*

LETTER II

This Letter professes to contain an "exact question," which is somewhat singularly inexactly put. In its strict grammatical form it asks for a definition of the members of a Clerical Council, and their business as such. This "exact question" is in fact an illustration of the fallacy of asking two questions in one, though a question demanding to be answered with "mathematical" precision should have been set with mathematical accuracy. But here at the outset a protest must be entered against being called upon to answer a question set in ambiguous words and misleading phrases, and based upon assumptions which those questioned would reject. It is impossible to deal with a so-called "axiomatic" question which instantly passes into a cloudy rhetorical illustration.

"The attached servants of a particular State." Does that expression mean, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still"? or, is it used in the same sense as "attached to

the staff"? But are there many of the clergy who would say, "I am an attached and salaried servant of the State, and nothing more?" Are there many who would allow that they were "salaried" by the State at all? Are there many who would grant that they had been "examined" and "numbered" and admitted into a "body of trustworthy persons" either by the State or by its agents? And yet all these previous questions must be answered before we can consider at all the "axiomatic" question which the clergy are "earnestly called upon" to solve. The question set down for solution implies some such inquiries as these: Is not the Church of England merely a Department of the State of England? Does not a clergyman belong to the Ecclesiastical Service just as an *employé* of the Treasury, or the Home Office, or the Post Office, belongs to the Civil Service? For example, the authorities at Chamouni examine and approve of certain men as guides for mountaineering: does not the English State similarly examine and approve of certain men as guides for England and the English "in the way known of all good men

that leadeth unto life"? A most fallacious employment of a "universal" for a "particular," for either the clergy must be excluded from the number of "all good men," or the assertion that all good men agree in their knowledge falls to the ground, seeing that in the fourth Letter the clergy are charged with not having "determined quite clearly" what the way that leadeth unto life may be.

But taking this Alpine illustration for what it may be worth, we may ask, "What does it mean?" Is it not intended to exalt practical questions, and to depreciate all doctrine and dogma and theological opinion, either from its liability on the one hand to be narrow or insular, "Chamounist or Grindelwaldist," or on the other from its tendency to be vague and transcendental, dealing with "celestial mountains" and unfathomable "crevasses"? Will it not admit of some such paraphrase as this, "Your teachings as to Episcopacy or Congregationalism, seven sacraments or two, and the like, are mere local opinions, and so away with them; your doctrines as to the Holy Trinity, the

Incarnation, and the like, are mere transcendentalism, and so away with them also,—

> 'For modes of faith let zealous bigots fight,
> He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.'"

Still it may be allowable to hint that the qualifications of a "guide" as laid down in this Letter are somewhat peculiar. It might have been supposed by a plain man that a Chamounist guide was expected to know at least something as to the localities of the Mer de Glace, the Jardin, or the Grand Mulets, but he is seemingly to rise superior to any "Chamounist opinions on geography," and to be prepared to rely only upon a universal science of locality and athletics, a reliance which has been the fruitful cause of mountaineering fatalities.

The reply which most Clerical Councils would return respecting the "axiomatic" question of this Letter would probably be, "We cannot answer a fallacy; we are not careful to answer thee in this matter."

LETTER III

A second question is now propounded respecting the Christian Gospel. "The Gospel of Christ" is spoken of in a connection which seems to indicate that Luther and Augustine were equally, in the writer's opinion, the setters forth of a "gospel." Is this an unintentional disclosure of his estimate of our blessed Lord, — "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God," and no more than that? For the eighth Letter contains a sneer at the Gospel that He is our Advocate with the Father, as one to mend the world with. A confused question follows, which may mean either, that it is in the first place desirable that the Gospel should be put into plain words, or, that the first principles of the Gospel should be put into plain words. Its probable meaning is, "Is it not desirable that religious teaching should be divested of any mysteries?" The extraordinary supposition that the Gospel is intended to be set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles can only be

equalled by a supposition that a treatise on military tactics is embodied in the Articles of War. Perhaps even some of the axiomatic principles of mathematics, such as that "a point is that which hath no parts," though laid down in "plain words and short terms," might sorely perplex "simple persons."

But several fallacies underlie this second question. The fallacy that the moral principles of our nature are necessarily connected with the extent of our intellectual capacities; the fallacy that Divine Truths can be adequately expressed through the inaccurate instrument of human language; the fallacy that deep things are necessarily made plain by the use of plain words; the fallacy that everything upon which we act is necessarily understood. A plain man does not refuse to use the telegraph because he may know nothing about the Correlation of Force, or a simple person to travel because "space" is beyond his comprehension. If the Gospel is, as St. Paul says it is, a revelation of the power of God unto salvation, an amount of mystery must necessarily surround it. Since it is impossible that the Divine Nature should be to us

other than a mystery, a revelation of Divine purposes such as is the Gospel as understood by the Church, must remain mysterious also. Only upon the supposition that our Lord was the teacher of a high but still human morality can we remove all mystery from the Christian Gospel, if it still deserve the name. Such teaching might be conveyed in plain words and short terms, but it would cease to be a Gospel which angels desire to look into, and could hardly be described as the "manifold wisdom of God," or be the story of the "love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

The Gospel, as the Church understands it, rests upon the revealed fact of the Incarnation, or the union of the Infinite with the Finite, that He who is very God of very God became man in order to introduce the Divine possibility of manhood being made to partake of the Divine nature; and so long as the triumphal chant ascends that "the Catholic Faith is this," so long will the Church's Faith be veiled indeed with mystery, and so long will she continue to gather within her bounds the humble and holy men of heart, who are content to say, "I cannot understand: I love."

That "God sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him" are short and plain words enough, and Gospel enough, surely, but the depth of their meaning is unfathomable by even the most cultivated understanding, to which the power of God and the wisdom of God may appear to be but foolishness.

Letter IX

This Letter, after endorsing the expressions of the preceding one, deals apparently with Capital and Labour. The clergy, if not required to divide the inheritance among their brethren, or to actually serve tables, are, taking "Property is theft" as their text, to resolutely and daily inquire how the dinners of their flock are earned. The gist of the Letter seems to be that the worker earns and the capitalist steals his dinner. It is really possible that the clergy do constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake, even though they may not subscribe to all the articles of some peculiar

schemes of social science, nor hold some singular doctrines as to political economy. Doubtless were they to assimilate their conduct to that of an injudicious district-visitor, they would have to take a new view of "life and its sacraments," whatever this expression may mean.

It would seem as if the writer had yet to learn that a Christian Church may exist teaching the most dogmatic definitions of doctrine, binding, even in this respect, burdens on men's shoulders grievous to be borne, while its members may be patterns of self-denial in "offices of temporal ministry to the poor." He does not appear to regard with favour the "Evangelistic sect of the English Church;" if this is intended for the "Evangelical" sect, Charles Kingsley could say, in a certain place, of its founders, "They were inspired by a strange new instinct that God had bidden them 'to clothe the hungry and feed the naked.'" Yet these men thought that "justification by faith only" was the Gospel they were "to carry to mend the world with, forsooth."

Letter XI

This concluding Letter calls but for slight remark,—of many portions we feel *O si sic omnia!* That there is much sorrowful truth underlying the unmeasured denunciations which have gone before few will care to deny. Few there are who will not pray to be kept from the evils which the writer discerns, and against which he inveighs. Such will be the first to regret that the Letters, as they read them, seem to fall short of the fulness of the Catholic Faith. "The holy teachers of all nations:" was our blessed Lord but one of them? There is nothing in the Letters to show that "the full force and meaning" of Gospel teaching is concerned with anything beyond wealth, and comfort, and national prosperity, and domestic peace. Preaching the acceptable year of the Lord is something more surely than an invective against usury.

We read that in old times Bezaleel was filled for his own work with the Spirit of God, but we do not read that he aspired to become a religious teacher; and when we are told by

one eminent in Art that a Church nineteen centuries old has yet to learn that the "will of the Lord" is a sanctification which brings comfort and wealth in its train, we think of a Moses who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, and then of a Paul who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

G. W. WALL.

From OXONIENSIS.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—Many thanks for the pamphlet. You ask me to send you any remarks I may have to make on the Letters, and I gather from your note at the beginning of the Letters as they now stand, that you intend making use of any remarks sent you that may commend themselves to your judgment. I am not vain enough to think mine of any special value. I will, however, write you my feelings about them, encouraged to do so by your statement in the note to the pamphlet, that the use made of remarks

sent you will be anonymous, if it is so desired.

First, as regards the general tone of the Letters. You tell me that the majority of the comments you have received have been hostile—people not taking their medicine without making wry faces. I am only surprised at the gentleness of the Letters, and I believe that if anyone will take the trouble to put down for himself on paper the sum of their contents, he will find it as difficult to gainsay as for careless readers it is easy to cavil at. On the other hand, the "hostile spirit" is readily provoked by the way in which some of the teaching of the Letters is put. Passages like the sixth paragraph in Letter X. appear an objectionable joke to some — perhaps to most—people; they do not see that it is really a serious jest, so put for brevity's sake, and that Ruskin might have put the same note to it as he has put to a passage in the "Crown of Wild Olive," p. 85, 8vo ed.: "Quite serious all this, though it reads like jest." I remember once asking Ruskin if his apparent joking in some Oxford lectures was not likely to lessen his influence, and he at once said to me,

"Remember that most of my apparent jokes are serious, *ghastly* jests." I think he would be less often misunderstood, if this were more often understood.

Your own preface marks the two main points in the spirit of the Letters. They are sternly practical, and at the same time their standard is one of an ideal perfection. People don't see that because the goal cannot be reached, the road towards it can still be trodden, and therefore they apply to the road an epithet which applies only to the goal. In this respect Ruskin's teaching might be mottoed with George Herbert's—

> "Who aimeth at the sky
> Shoots higher much than he that means a tree."

In fact, Ruskin's teaching, like that of the Bible, is not unpractical, but *unpractised.*

I will now take the Letters in detail. The first four of them are merely introductory to the main matter of the eleven. In these first five two questions are asked—

1. What is a clergyman of the Church of England? And to this the suggested answer

is (whom does it offend?), "A teacher of the Gospel of Christ to all nations."

2. What is the teaching of the Gospel he is to teach? What is that teaching, clearly and simply put?

Then Letter IV. suggests that the Lord's Prayer may be taken as containing the cardinal points of that teaching, containing not all that is to be learnt, but what all have to learn. And so we come to Letter V.; and I tried, in reading the Letters for myself, to do for them what Letter III. asks clergymen to do for the Gospel.

Letter V.—A clergyman's first duty is to make the Lord's Prayer clear and living to his people. This is what Ruskin has elsewhere insisted on in other matters—"clear," know your duty and your belief; "living," realize it in your life—realize it "as a Captain's order, to be obeyed" ("Crown of Wild Olive," Introduction, p. 13. The whole of this Introduction reads well with these Letters). Then the first clause of the Prayer is set forth as putting before us God as a loving Father.

Letter VI.—"Hallowed be Thy name." How do we fulfil the hope in our lives? How do

we betray it? Not in swearing only, as we are apt to think, but in the blasphemy of false and hypocritical prayer to, and praise of, *preaching about* God (last paragraph of the Letter). Clergymen, it is added, can prevent openly wicked men from being in their congregations (they are supposed to do so: Rubrics 2 and 3 before the Holy Communion Service); they can not only compel the wicked poor into, but expel the wicked rich out of, churches. God sees the heart: the clergy should look to the hands and lips.

Letter VII.—"Thy kingdom come:"—not an allusion to the second coming of the Son, which we cannot hasten, but to the coming of the kingdom of God the Father, which we can. This is again illustrated by the "Crown of Wild Olive" (I daresay it is by others of Ruskin's books, but it is convenient to refer chiefly to one, and that the one which contains what he calls his most biblical lecture), p. 56: "Observe it is a kingdom that is to come to us; we are not to go to it. Also it is not to be a kingdom of the dead, but of the living. Also it is not to come all at once, but quietly . . . without observation. *Also it is not to*

come outside of us, but in our hearts: 'the kingdom of God is within you.'" This is the sense in which we can hasten *it*.

Letter VIII. begins with a hit at the pleasure priests take in their priesthood's dignity, and at their avoidance of its unpleasant duties, and at their sometimes wearisome preaching.

Have they ever taught "Thy will be done," as it should be—1. In our own sanctification; 2. In understanding that will, and doing it, and striving to get it done (knowing their duty and doing it, and it alone)?

The remarks about the mediatorial (absolving-from-punishment) and the pastoral (purging-from-sin) functions of a "pastor," seem to me quite admirable.

The end of the Letter is subsequently amplified, Letter X.

Letter IX.—"Give us this day our daily bread." Yes, but we must work for it. "The man that will not work, neither shall he eat." A cardinal point with Ruskin: "But if you do" (*i.e.*, wish for God's kingdom), "you must do more than pray for it, you must work for it" ("Crown of Wild Olive," p. 56).

And the clergyman has to teach (Letter IX. goes on) what that work is and how it is to be done; and the life, to which their teaching should lead, is one "moderate in its self-indulgence, wide in its offices of temporal ministry to the poor," in the absence of which, prayer for harvest is mere blasphemy. For the spiritual bread is the first thing, and a clergyman's first message, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

Letter X.—"Forgive us our trespasses." The explanation of trespasses, and substitution of *debts* for it, is admirable ("Dimitte nobis *debita* nostra"), and admirably illustrated by the sins of omission being condemned in Christ's judgment,—"I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat."

The remarks on the "pleasantness" of the English liturgy recall those on the avoidance of unpleasantness by the English clergy in Letter VIII.

I pass over the notes on the advantage of "forms of prayer," and come to the end of Letter X. and Letter XI., which go together, and say practically, Pray honestly or not at all. "Faithful prayer implies always

correlative exertions;" "dishonest prayer is blasphemy of the worst kind."

"Crown of Wild Olive," p. 55, again: "Everybody in this room has been taught to pray daily, 'Thy kingdom come.' Now, if we hear a man swear in the streets, we think it very wrong, and say he 'takes God's name in vain.' But there is a twenty times worse way of taking His name in vain than that. It is to *ask God for what we don't want.* He doesn't like that sort of prayer. If you don't want a thing, don't ask for it; such asking is the worst mockery of your King you can insult Him with; the soldiers striking Him on the head was nothing to that. If you do not wish for His kingdom, don't pray for it."

In fact, prayer is worse than useless if not sincere, and it is insincere if not carried out in the life of the "pray-er." Thus, "One hour in the execution of justice is worth seventy years of (insincere) prayer" (Mahometan maxim, "Crown of Wild Olive," p. 49).

I must stop. Only the fifth paragraph in Letter XI., about parents looking for

"opportunities" for their children, is exactly parallel with "Sesame and Lilies," 8vo edition, p. 2 (Sub. 1, § 2), which might be added in an illustrative note. I must apologize for my long and rambling letter, but if it is of the least service to you I shall be content. I feel how inadequate it is to what I meant it to be, only I have no time just now to do more than write, as this letter is written—at the point of the pen.

OXONIENSIS.

LETTERS FROM BRANTWOOD-ON-THE-LAKE TO THE VICARAGE OF BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS

PREFACE

Some apology will naturally be expected for setting the following letters before the searching eye of a critical and possibly censorious public. I can only plead that the suggestion of their publication did not emanate from myself (for the idea of making these letters public property had never once in fifteen years crossed my mind), but was made to me by friends to whom it appeared that much in these letters is strongly characteristic of Mr. Ruskin, and illustrates (much too indulgently, alas!) the estimate he is good enough to form of a correspondent who does not to this day clearly understand to what happy

circumstance he is indebted for so fortunate a partiality. At the same time it must be confessed that *Laudari a viro laudato* is a harmless ambition for the possession of a stimulus which is good for every soul of man.

I will say no more upon that subject, lest my self-depreciation should be set down to vanity. Nevertheless it has always been a source of innocent pleasure to me that I have been enabled to bring my ship without damage through so perilous a voyage to port in a safe and honourable harbourage.

The matters discussed in the following letters range only over a narrow field; but it will be found that they present a truly life-like picture of the writer with his shrewd common-sense and deeper wisdom, enlivened in no small measure by a quick impulsiveness which is sometimes rather startling. Some of his

sudden sallies serve the purpose of the condiments, which displeasing if taken alone, give piquancy to our ordinary food.

F. A. MALLESON.

I.

July 8th, 1879.

MY DEAR MR. MALLESON,—You must make no public announcement of any paper by me. I am not able to count on my powers of mind for an hour; and will absolutely take no responsibility. What I do send you—if anything—will be in the form of a series of short letters to yourself, of which you have already the first: This the second for the sake of continuing the order unbroken contains the next following question which I should like to ask. If when the sequence of letters is in your possession

you like to read any part or parts of them as a subject of discussion at your afternoon meeting, I shall be glad and grateful.

Ever faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

2.

[*Undated.*]

I am so ashamed of keeping R.'s book —but it's impossible for me to look at it properly till I have done my lecture, so much must be left undone of it anyhow * * *

Yes—you were glad to find we were at one in many thoughts. So was I. But we are not yet, you know, at one in our *sight* of this world and the dark ways of it. I hope to have you for a St. George's soldier one day.

3.

23rd July, 1879.

Thanks for your note and your kind feelings. But you ought to know more about me.

I profess to be a teacher; as you profess also.

But we teach on totally different methods.

You believe what you wish to believe; teach that it is wicked to doubt it, and remain at rest and in much self-satisfaction.

I believe what I find to be true, whether I like or dislike it. And I teach other people that the chief of all wickednesses is to tell lies in God's service, and to disgrace our Master and destroy His sheep as *involuntary* Wolves.

I, therefore, am in perpetual effort to

learn and discern—in perpetual Unrest and Dissatisfaction with myself.

But it would simply require you to do twenty years of such hard work as I have done before you could in any true sense speak a word to me on such matters. You could not use a word in my sense. It would always mean to you something different.

For instance—one of my quite bye works in learning my business of a teacher—was to read the New Testament through in the earliest Greek MS. (eleventh century) which I could get hold of. I examined every syllable of it and have more notes of various readings and on the real meanings of perverted passages than you would get through in a year's work. But I should require you to do the same work before I would discuss a text with you. From that and such work in all kinds I have

formed opinions which you could no more move than you could Coniston Old Man. They may be wrong, God knows; I *trust* in them infinitely less than you do in those which you have formed simply by refusing to examine—or to think—or to know what is doing in the world about you; but you cannot stir them.

I very very rarely make presents of my books. If people are inclined to learn from them, I say to them as a physician would—Pay me my fee—you will not obey me if I give you advice for nothing.

But I should like a kind neighbour like you to know something about me, and I have therefore desired my publisher to send you one * of my many books which, after doing the work that I have done, you would have to read before you could really use words in my meaning.

* Crown of Wild Olive.—ED.

If you will read the introduction carefully, and especially dwell on the 10th to 15th lines of the 15th page, you will at least know me a little better than to think I believe in my own resurrection—but not in Christ's: and if you look to the final essay on War, you may find some things in it which will be of interest to you in your own * work.

4.

VENICE, *8th September*, 1879.

* * * * There is nothing whatever said as far as I remember in the July 'Fors,' about "people's surrendering their judgment." A colonel does not surrender his judgment in obeying his general, nor a soldier in obeying his colonel. But there can be no army

* Translating some of Erckmann-Chatrian's.—ED.

where they *act* on their own judgments.

The Society of Jesuits is a splendid proof of the power of obedience, but its curse is falsehood. When the Master of St. George's Company bids you lie, it will be time to compare our discipline to the Jesuits. We are their precise opposites — fiercely and at all costs frank, while they are calmly and for all interests lying.

5.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
July 30th, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I fear I have kept the proofs too long, but I wanted to look at them again. I am confirmed in my impression that the book will do much good.* But I think it would

* Life and Work of Jesus Christ. Ward & Lock. —ED.

have done more if you had written the lives of two or three of your parishioners. Such an answer would I give to a painter who sent to me a picture of the Last Supper. "You had better, it seems to me, have painted a Harvest Home." I am gravely doubtful of the possibility, in these days, of writing or painting on such subjects, advisedly and securely.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

6.

July 31*st*, 1879.

I have received this week the two most astonishing letters I ever yet received in my life. And one of them is yours, read this morning—telling me—that you don't think you could write the life of an old woman! Yet

you think you *can* write the life of Christ!

If you can at all explain this state of your mind to me I will tell you more distinctly what I think of the piece I saw. But I don't think you will communicate the thought to your publisher; and I never meant you to use my former one in that manner.

Mind a publisher thinks only of money, and I know nothing of saleableness. The pause in my other letters is one of pure astonishment at you; which at present occupies all the time I have to spare on the subject, and has culminated to-day.

I am so puzzled. I can scarcely think of anything else till you tell me what you mean in the bit about being "called late."

Have you done no work in the vineyard 'yet' then?

7.

August 2nd, 1879.

I am still simply speechless with astonishment at you. It is no question of your right to the best I can say; it is all at your command. But for the present my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth. I can only tell you with all the strength I have to read and understand and believe 2 Esdras iv. 2, 20, 21.*

* Thy heart hath gone too far in this world, and thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the most High? Then answered he me, and said, Thou hast given a right judgment, but why judgest thou not thyself also. For like as the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea to his floods: even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing, but that which is upon the earth: and he only that dwelleth above the heavens, may understand the things that are above the height of the heavens.

8.

August 4th, 1879.

It is just because you undertook the task so *happily*, that I should have thought you unfit to write the life of a Man of Sorrows, even had he been a Man only. But your last letter, remember, claims inspiration for your guide, and recognizes a personal call at sixty, as if the Call to the ministry had been none, and the receiving the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands an empty ceremony.

In writing the life of a parishioner and in remitting or retaining their sins you would in my conception have been fulfilling your appointed work. But I cannot conceive the claim to be a fit Evangelist without more proof of miraculous appointment than you are conscious of. I know you to be

conscientious, yes — but I think the judicial doom of this country is to have conscience alike of its Priests and Prophets *hardened*. Why should any letter of mine make you anxious if you had indeed conscience of inspiration?

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

9.

August 7th.

I hope to be able soon now to resume the series of letters; but it seems to me there is no need whatever of more than three or four more respecting the last clauses of the Lord's Prayer. Those in your hands contain questions enough, if seriously entertained, to occupy twenty meetings; and I could only hope that some one of them might be carefully taken up by your friends. I think,

however, in case of the clerical feeling being too strong, that I must ask you, if you print letters at all, to print them without omission. And if you do not print them, to return them to me for my own expansion and arrangement.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

10.

August 9th.

I have got to work on the letters again; it would make me nervous to think of all these plans of yours. Suppose you leave all that till you see what the first debate comes to?* And in the meantime I'll finish as best I can.

* My clerical friends and brethren must not be displeased with me if I here mention the fact that at the meeting of twenty-three clergy where I *proposed* to read Mr. Ruskin's letters to them, I was only authorized to do so by a majority of two. I can

II.

September 2nd.

That there are only a hundred copies in that form,* is just a reason why the book should be in your library, where it will be enjoyed and useful; and not in mine, where it would not be opened once in a twelvemonth. It is one of the advantages of a small house (and it has many) that one is compelled to consider of all one's books whether they are in use or not.

I yesterday ordered a 'Fors' to be sent you containing in its close the most important piece of a religious character in the book—this I hope you

scarcely describe the dismay and consternation with which the letters themselves were received,—though of course not universally, in another meeting of the same number.

* Grosart, "Poems of Christopher Harvey."

will also allow to stay on your shelves. The two that I sent with this note contain so much that is saucy that I only send them in case you want to look at the challenge referred to in the Letters to the Bishop of Manchester, see October, 1877, pp. 322, 323, and January 1875, p. 11. You can keep as long as you like, but please take care of them, as my index is not yet done. The next letter will come before the week end, but it's a difficult one.

12.

THE VICARAGE,
BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS,
September 4th, 1879.

MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—These parish engagements having been discharged which have taken up my time very closely since I came back from Brighton,

I am returning to your letters, and I think you would like to know what I am doing. I am copying them down, first, as I can read them aloud better in my own handwriting, and secondly, because I shall not place the originals in the printer's hands.

Then many thoughts arise in my mind as I re-peruse them, and I must needs (and I think I am allowed) give expression to my thoughts. Hence each letter is followed by my own comments or reflections upon it. But this need not make you feel nervous. On the whole there is much agreement between your modes of thought on religious subjects and my own.

If this is thought a piece of cool assurance, I may reply in the words or sense of Euclid, That similar triangles may have the most various areas. I am not equal to you, but I claim to be

similar. These comments I sometimes think I ought to show to you before publication; but perhaps you will agree with me that if I am fit to be trusted at all, I had better be left unconstrained. I shall certainly come to you first, if I find myself seriously at variance with you, which has not happened yet as far as the first clause of the Lord's Prayer. Then it is likely that I shall read the letters before two or three Clerical Societies,* including my own, the Furness.

The opinions delivered by those clergy it will be my duty, and I hope it will be my pleasure, to collect and to record. I propose also to invite the clergy who have not time or opportunity to speak in the meeting to write to me, and I will use my best judgment in selecting from their correspondence all that seems worth preserving.

* At Liverpool and Brighton.

I am very sensible that this is a most delicate and responsible task that is laid upon me, and I wonder to find myself so engaged. It will need tact, discretion, and kindness of heart, and I trust I may be endued with the necessary qualifications to a much larger extent than I think I naturally possess.

I find no small comfort at the foot of the first page of the Preface to "Sesame and Lilies." There I feel I am at one with you.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. MALLESON.

13.

BRANTWOOD, *September 5th*, 1879.

I shall be delighted to have the comments, though it will be well first to have the series of letters done—the last but one is coming to-morrow. I have

only written them in the sense of your sympathy in most points, and am sure you will make the best possible use of them.

14.

September 7th, 1879.

It is rather comic that your first reply to my challenge concerning usury should be a prospectus of a Company * wishing to make 5 per cent. out of Broughton poor men's ignorance. You couldn't have sent me a project I should have regarded with more abomination.

15.

September 9th, 1879.

There is absolutely no debate possible as to what usury is any more than

* A projected Public Hall.

what adultery is. The Church has only been polluted by the indulgence of it since the 16th century. Usury is *any kind whatever* of interest on loan, and it is the essential modern form of Satan.

I send you an old book full of sound and eternal teaching on this matter —please take care of it as a friend's gift, and one I would not lose for its weight in gold. Please read first the Sermon by Bishop Jewel, page 14, and then the rest at your pleasure or your leisure.

No halls are wanted, they are all rich men's excuses for destroying the home life of England.

The public library should be at the village school (and I could put ten thousand pounds' worth of books into a single cupboard), and all that is done for education should be pure Gift. Do

you think that this rich England, which spends fifty millions a year in drink and gunpowder, can't educate her poor without being paid interest for her Charity?

At the time of writing this the following letters passed between Mr. Ruskin and myself:—

16.

THE VICARAGE,
BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS,
September 12th, 1879.

MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I feel in a great strait. I have before me a task of the utmost delicacy, and one before which I feel that I *ought* to shrink,—that of editing your letters, with the accompaniment of comments of my own. You trust me, evidently, or you would have laid down limitations to guard yourself

against misrepresentation. My anxiety is lest I should abuse that large and generous confidence you have so kindly placed in me. Let me explain my position, as I see it myself.

The series will consist of eleven letters, when you have sent me your last. I have now copied nine, and written concisely the views I have presumed to form upon each. With every letter I mostly agree and sympathize, looking on them as "counsels of perfection," and viewing the great subjects you deal with from a far higher standpoint than (in my experience) either laymen or clergymen generally view them. All that there is in me of *enthusiasm* rings in answering chords to the notes you strike. Yet I do not *always* agree. But when I do disagree, I acknowledge it is because your standard is

excessively high—too high for practical purposes.

Now, I ask, shall you consider it strictly fair and honourable in me to receive your letters, read them or send them to assemblies of clergy, gather their views, both adverse and favourable, and add diffident animadversions of my own? If you will allow this to be right, and if you will trust to my sense of what is proper, to deal with your letters in the spirit of a Christian and a gentleman, then, hoping to fulfil your expectations, I shall proceed in my work with a mind more at ease; for I could not endure the thought that, after all was done, I had written a single sentence or word that had inflicted pain upon you.

Then comes another question. Do you wish to hear or read my comments

before they are printed? I say frankly, if you trust me, I would prefer not; for it would not, perhaps, be pleasant for me either to read your praises, or my poor criticisms, to your face. But still, if you wish it, I shall be ready at your bidding; for I recognize your right to require it. Only I would rather read them to you myself some quiet autumn evening or two.

17.

September 13th.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I am so very grateful for your proposal to edit the letters without further reference to me. I think that will be exactly the right way; and I believe I can put you at real ease in the doing of it by explaining as I can in very few words the

kind of carte-blanche I should rejoicingly give you.

Interrupted to-day! more to-morrow, with, I hope, the last letter.

J. R.

18.

Sunday, September 14th.

I've nearly done the last letter, but will keep it to-morrow rather than finish hurriedly for the earlier post. Your nice little note has just come, and I can only say that you cannot please me better than by acting with perfect freedom in all ways, and that I only want to see or reply to what you wish me for the matter's sake. And surely there is no occasion for any thought for waste of type about *me* personally, except only to express your knowledge of my real desire for the health and power of the

Church. More than this praise you *must* not give me, for I have learned almost everything I may say that I know by my errors.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

19.

September 16th, 1879.

I should have returned these two recent letters before now, but have been looking for the earlier letters which have got mislaid in a general rearrangement of all things by a new secretary. I am almost sure to come on them to-morrow in my own packing up for town, where I must be for a month hence. Please address, &c.

20.

[*Undated.*]

I am sincerely grieved by the first part of your letter, and scarcely like to trouble you with answer to the close. * * * Surely the first thing to be done with the letters is to use them as you propose, and you may find fifty suggestions, made by persons or circumstances after that, worth considering. I do not doubt that I could easily add to the bulk of MS.; but should then, I think, stipulate for having the book published by my own publisher.

21.

October 13th.

I did not get your kind and interesting letter till yesterday, and can only write in utter haste this

morning to say that I think nothing can possibly be more satisfactory (to me personally at least) and more honourable than what you tell me of the wish of the meeting to have the letters printed for their quiet consideration.*

They are entirely at your command and theirs—but don't sell the copyright to any publisher. Keep it in your own hands, and after expenses are paid of course any profits should go to the poor. Please write during this week to me at St. George's Museum, Walkley, Sheffield.

* Canon Rawnsley kindly offered to print them at his own expense ; only as many were printed as would be sufficient for three or four clerical societies. Had I known how valuable those little pamphlets were destined to become, I should have had many more printed !—ED.

22.

From CANON FARRAR.

October 29th, 1879.

I am much obliged to you for your courtesy in sending me the letters. I am not, however, inclined to enter into any controversy, being painfully overwhelmed with the very duties which Mr. Ruskin seems to think that we don't do—looking after the material and religious interests of the sick, the suffering, the hungry, the drunken, and the extremely wretched.

Yours very truly,

F. W. FARRAR.

23.

SHEFFIELD, *October 17th*, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—I am sincerely interested and moved by your

history of your laborious life — and shall be entirely glad to leave the completed volume as your property, provided always you sell it to no publisher — but take just percentage on the editions: and provided also that an edition be issued of the letters themselves in their present simple form of which the profits, if any, shall be for the poor of the district.* It would lower your position in the whole matter if it could be hinted that I had written the letters with any semi-purpose of serving my friend. On the other hand you will have just and honourable right to the profits of the completed edition which your labour and judgment will have made possible and guided into the most serviceable form.

* This, of course, with Mr. Allen's concurrence, is my intention.—ED.

I am thankful to see that the letters read clearly and easily, and contain all that it was in my mind to get said; that nothing can be possibly more right in every way than the printing and binding—nor more courteous and firm than your preface.

Yes—there *will* be a chasm to cross —a tauriformis Aufidus *—greater than Rubicon, and the roar of it for many a year has been heard in the distance, through the gathering fog on earth more loudly.

The River of Spiritual Death in this world — and entrance to Purgatory in the other, come down to us.

When will the feet of the Priests be

* Sic tauriformis volvitur Aufidus,
Qui regna Dauni præfluit Appuli
Quum sævit, horrendamque cultis
Diluviem meditatur agris.
—Hor. *Carm.* iv. 14.

dipped in the still brim of the water? Jordan overflows his banks already.

— —

When you have got your large edition with its correspondence into form, I should like to read the sheets as they are issued, and put merely letters of reference, *a*, *b*, and *c*, to be taken up in a short epilogue. But I don't want to do or say anything till you have all in perfect readiness for publication. I should merely add my reference letters in the margin, and the shortest possible notes at the end.

Please send me ten more of these private ones for my own friends.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

24.

Extract of a Letter from the late

MISS SUSANNA BEEVER.

("The Younger Lady of the Thwaite, Coniston," to whom Mr. Ruskin dedicated "Frondes Agrestes.")

October 28th, 1879.

DEAR MR. MALLESON,—My sister has asked me to write and thank you for two copies of Mr. Ruskin's Letters, which you have been so good as to send to her. It is curious that before the post came this morning I had been wondering whether I might ask you for a copy. * * * I have already read these deeply interesting Letters five times. They are like the "foam globes of leaven," I might say they have exercised my mind very much. Things in them which at first seemed rather startling, prove on closer

examination to be full of deep truth. The suggestions in them lead to "great searchings of heart." There is much with which I entirely agree; much over which to ponder. What an insight into human nature is shown in the remark that though we are so ready to call ourselves "miserable sinners," we resent being accused of any special fault. * * *

25.

November 7th, 1879.

I am so glad we understand each other now and that you will carry out your plan quietly.

I think you should correct the present little book by my revise, and print enough for whatever private circulation the members of the meeting wish,

but that it should not be made public till well after the large book is out. For which I shall look with deepest interest.

26.

November 19th, 1879.

My dear Malleson, — I have not been able to answer a word lately, being quite unusually busy in France —and you never remember that it takes *me* as long to write a chapter as you to write a book, and tries me more to do it—so that I am sick of the feel of a pen this many a day. I'm delighted to hear of your popularity,* being sure that all you advise people to do will be kind and right. I am not surprised at the popularity, but

* Meaning in the press notices of the Editor's "Life of Christ."—Ed.

I wonder that you have not had some nasty envious reviews.*

I like the impudence of these Scotch brats.† Do they suppose it would have been either pleasure or honour to me to come and lecture there? It is perhaps as much their luck as mine that they changed their minds about it. I shall be down at Brantwood soon (*D. V.*). Poor Mr. Sly's‡ death is a much more troublous thing to me than Glasgow Elections.

27.

January 5th, 1880.

A Happy New Year to you. If I may judge or guess by the efforts

* Seventeen *very good*, five *good*, five *fair*, six *bad*, two *nasty*, *envious!*—ED.

† Glasgow University.

‡ Of the Waterhead, Coniston.

made to draw me into the business, it is likely to be a busy one for you! Will you kindly now send me back my old book on Usury? I've got a letter (which for his lordship's sake had better never been written) from the Bishop of Manchester, and may want to quote a word or two of my back letter. I send the letter with my reply this month to the *Contemporary*.

28.

January 7th, 1880.

So many thanks for your kind little note and the book which I have received quite safely; and many more thanks for taking all the enemies' fire off me and leaving me quiet. I've been all this morning at work on finches and buntings; but I must give the

Bishop a turn to-morrow. This weather takes my little wits out of me wofully; but I am always affectionately yours,

J. R.

29.

May 10th, 1880.

My dear Malleson, — Yes, the omission of the 'Mr.' meant much change in all my feelings towards you and estimates of you—for which change, believe me, I am more glad and thankful than I can well tell you. Not but that of course I always felt your essential goodness and rightness of mind, but I did not at all understand the scope of them.

And you will have the reward of the Visitation of the Sick, though every day I am more sure of the mistake made by good people universally—in

trying to pull fallen people up—instead of keeping yet safe ones from tumbling after them, and always spending their pains on the worst instead of the best material. If they want to be able to save the lost like Christ, let them first be sure they can say with Him, "Of those Thou gavest Me I have lost none."

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

The 'Epilogue's' an awful bother to me in this May time! I have not done a word yet, but you shall have it before the week is out.

30.

April 17.

The letters seem all very nice—I shall have very little to say about them, except to explain what you observe

and have been misunderstood. . . . Of course my notes shall be sent to you and added to when you see need. But I cannot do it quickly.

31.

April 14, 1880.

Thanks for nice new proofs. I haven't found any false references, but I didn't look. I'll have all verified by my secretary. I'm busy with an article on modern novels and don't feel a bit pious just now; so the responses have hung fire.

32.

May 9.

You are really very good about this, and shall have the notes (*D. V.*) within a fortnight. The Scott could not be

put off, being promised for June 19, *Nineteenth Century*, and I could not do novels and sermons together. I don't think the notes will be long. The letters seem to be mostly compliments or small objections not worth noticing.

33.

May 14th, 1880.

I've just done—yesterday with Scott, and took up the letters for the first time this morning seriously.

I had never seen *yours* at all when I wrote last. I fell first on Mr. ——, whom I read with some attention, and commented on with little favour: went on to the next, and remained content with that taste till I had done my Scott.

I have this morning been reading

your own, on which I very earnestly congratulate you. God knows it isn't because they are friendly or complimentary, but because you *do* see what I mean, and people hardly ever do—and I think it needs very considerable power and feeling to forgive and understand as you do. You have said everything *I* want to say, and much more — except on the one point of excommunication, which will be the chief, almost the only subject of my final note.

I write in haste to excuse myself for my former note.

Ever affectionately
and gratefully yours,
J. Ruskin.

(Note.—A legal friend remarks that in his opinion I should refrain from printing *extracts* from letters, and always print

the whole; or, indeed, in the present case, the whole series of letters, lest it should be suspected that I am making a self-indulgent selection only of the good words which Mr. Ruskin is kind enough to use in his communications with me. Let me here say, however, that had there been in all these letters any which conveyed censure, stricture, or blame of any kind, I should not have withheld my hand from including them. But no such letters ever came to me. Mr. Ruskin is the very pink of courtesy with his friends, and he *may* have suppressed remarks which he thought might wound me. But I am reproducing here not my friend's secret thoughts, but only those of his letters which remain in my possession. —EDITOR.)

34.

May 26th, 1880.

I'm at work on the 'Epilogue,' but it takes more trouble than I expected. I see there's a letter from you which I leave unopened, for fear there should be anything in it to put me in a bad temper, which you might easily do without meaning it. You shall have the 'Epilogue' as soon as I can get it done; but you won't much like it, for there are bits in the Clergymen's letters that have put my bristles up. They ought either to have said nothing about me, or known more.

I should give that rascally Bishop a dressing "au sérieux," only you wouldn't like to godfather it, so I'll keep it for somewhere else.*

* Needless to say that in this energetic language, the Master of the Company of St. George is referring to nothing whatever in the stainless character of

35.

June 7th, 1880.

Your letter is a relief to my mind, and shall not be taken advantage of for more delay. The wet day or two would get all done: but I simply can't think of anything but the sun while it shines.

And I've had second, third, and seventh thoughts about several things: as it is coming out I believe it will be a useful contribution to the book.

I shall get it in the copyist's hand on Monday, and as it's one of my girl secretaries, I shall be teased till it's done, so it's safe for the end of the week (*D. V.*). I am sadly afraid she'll make me cut out some of the spiciest

the great Bishop, of whom it is justly recorded in the inscription on his monument in Manchester Cathedral that "he won all hearts by opening to them his own;" except only in the matter of house-rent and interest of money, opinions which the Bishop shared with the great mass of civilized humanity.

bits: the girl secretaries are always allowed to put their pens through anything they choose. Please drop the 'Mr.'; it is a matter of friendship, not as if there were any of different powers. God only knows of higher and lower, and, as far as I can judge, is likely to put ministry to the sick much above public letters.

Thanks for note of Menyanthes Trifòliata.

I haven't seen it, scarcely moving at present beyond my wood or garden.

36.

June 13th, 1880.

You are really very good to put up with all that vicious Epilogue. But it won't discredit *you* in the end, whatever it may do me. I hope much otherwise.

I will send you to-morrow the Lincoln,

or, possibly, York MS. to look at. You will find the Litany following the Quicunque vult, and on the leaf marked by me 83, at the top the passage I began quotation with. It will need a note; for *domptnum* is, I believe, strong Yorkshire Latin for Donum Apostolicum, not Dominum.

The *e* in Ecclesie for *æ* is the proper form in medieval Latin.

The calendar and Litany are invaluable in their splendid lists of English saints, and the entire book unreplaceable, so mind you lock it up carefully!

37.

There's a good deal of interest in the enclosed layman's letter, I think. Would you like to print any bits of it? I cannot quite make up my mind if it's worth or not.

38.

June 27th, 1880.

The 'Epilogue' is all but done to-day, and shall be sent by railway guard to-morrow (*D. V.*), with a book which will further interest you and your good secretary. It is as fine an example of the coloured print Prayer-Book as I have seen, date 1507, and full of examples of the way Romanism had ruined itself at that date. But it may contain in legible form some things of interest. I never could make out so much as its Calendar; but the songs about the saints and rhymed hours are very pretty. Though the illuminations are all ridiculous and one or two frightful, most are more or less pretty, and nearly all interesting. You can keep it any time, but you must promise me not to show it to anybody

who does not know how to handle a book. * * *

(NOTE.—I may mention here, once for all, that wherever there are omissions left in Mr. Ruskin's letters, there is nothing of interest or importance in those passages for any one but for the receiver of that letter.)

39.

July 15th, 1880.

* * * It is a further light to me, on your curious differences from most clergymen, very wonderful and venerable to me, that you should understand Byron!

40.

June 25th.

DEAR MALLESON,—No, I don't want the letter printed in the least; but it

ought to have interested you very differently. It is by a much older man than I, who has never heard of our letters, but has been a very useful and influential person in his own parish, and is a practical and acceptable contributor to sporting papers. He is an able lawyer also, and knows far better than I do and far better than most clergymen know, what could really be done in their country parishes if they had a mind.

The bit of manuscript is perfectly fac-similed by your niece, but I can't read it: and it will be much better that you mark the places you wish certification about, and that I then send the book up to the British Museum, and have the whole made clear. The *dompt* is a very important matter indeed.

I have got the last bit of epilogue

fairly on foot this morning, and can promise it on Monday all well.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

41.

April 30th, 1881.

Dear Malleson,—It will be many a day before I recover yet—if ever—but with caution I hope not to go wild again, and to get what power belongs to my age slowly back. When were you in the same sort of danger? Let me very strongly warn you from the whirlpool edge—the going down in the middle is gloomier than I can tell you.

But I shall thankfully see you and your friend here. Visiting is out of the question for me. I can bear no fatigue nor excitement away from my home. I pay visits no more—anywhere (even

in old times few). It is always a great gladness to me when young students care about old books—and I remember as a duty the feeling I used to have in getting a Missal, even after I was past a good many other pleasures. You made such good use of that book too, that I am happy in yielding to any wish of yours about it, so your young friend * shall have it if he likes. The marked price is quite a fair market one for it, though you might look and wait long before such a book came *into* the market. The British Museum people were hastily and superciliously wrong in calling it a common book. It is not a *showy* one; but there are few more interesting or more perfect service books in English manuscript, and

* Rev. J. R. Haslam, now Vicar of Thwaites, Cumberland. See Appendix.—ED.

the Museum people buy cart-loads of big folios that are not worth the shelf room.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

42.

April 23rd, 1881.

MY DEAR MALLESON,—These passages of description and illustration of the general aspect of Ephesus in St. Paul's time seem to me much more forcibly and artistically written than anything you did in the "Life of Christ"; and I could not suggest any changes to you which you could now carry out under the conditions of time to revise, except a more clear statement of the Ephesian goddess.

[I really do not think Mr. Ruskin would wish that *all* he wrote in the

next sentence about the Ephesian Diana should be placed before the public eye. But I resume in the middle of a sentence.]

. . . practically at last and chiefly of the Diabolic Suction of the Usurer; and her temple, which you luckily liken to the Bank of England, was in fact what that establishment would be as the recognised place of pious pilgrimage for all Jews, infidels, or prostitutes in the realm of England. You could not conceive the real facts of these degraded worships of the mixed Greek and Asiatic races, unless you gave a good year's work to the study of the decline of Greek art in the 3rd and 4th centuries B.C.

Charles Newton's pride in discovering Mausolus, and engineers' whistling over his Asiatic mummy, have entirely corrupted and thwarted the uses of

the British Museum Art Galleries. The Drum of that Diana Temple is barbarous rubbish, not worth tenpence a ton; and if I shewed you a photograph of the head of Mausolus without telling you what it was, I will undertake that you saw with candid eyes in it nothing more than the shaggy poll of a common gladiator. But your book will swim with the tide. It is best so.

43.

July . . .

I'm not in the least anxious about my MS., and shall only be glad if you like to keep it long enough to read thoroughly. There must surely be published copies of such extant, though, and worth enquiring after?

Partly the fine weather, partly the

heat, partly a fit of Scott and Byron have stopped the Epilogue utterly for the time! You cannot be in any hurry for it surely? There's plenty to go on printing with.

I don't think you will find the n's and m's much bother; the contractions are the great nuisance. But I do think this development of Gothic writing one of the oddest absurdities of mankind.

The illumination of "the fool hath said in his heart," snapping his fingers, or more accurately making the indecent sign called "the fig" by the Italians, is a very unusual one in this MS., and peculiarly English.

44.

There is not the least use in my looking over these sheets: you probably

know more about Athens than I do, and what I do know is out of and in Smith's Dictionary, where you can find it without trouble.

For the rest you must please always remember what I told you once for all, that you could never interest *me* by writing about people, either at Athens or Ephesus, but only of those of the parish of Broughton-in-Furness.

That new translation could not come out well; that much I know without looking at it. One must believe the Bible before one understands it, (I mean, believe that it is understandable) and one must understand before one can translate it. Two stages in advance of your Twenty-Four Co-operative Tyndales!

45.

26th May.

DEAR MALLESON,—I should be delighted to see Canon Weston and you any day: but I want J— to be at home, and she is going to town next week for a month, and will be fussy till she goes. She promises to be back faithfully within the week after that—within the Sunday, I mean. Fix any day or any choice of days if one is wet after the said Sunday, and we shall both be in comfort ready.

If Canon Weston or you are going away anywhere, come any day before that suits you.

In divinity matters I am obliged to stop—for my sins, I suppose. But it seems I am almost struck mad when I think earnestly about them, and I'm only reading now natural history or nature.

Never mind Autograph people, they are never worth the scratch of a pen.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

46.

August 26th, 1881.

I'm in furious bad humour with the weather, and cannot receive just now at all, having had infinitely too much of indoors, and yet unable to draw for darkness, or write for temper. But I will see Mr. —— if he has any other reason than curiosity for wishing to see me—what does he want with me?

47.

21st October.

I am fairly well, but have twenty times the work in hand that I am able for; and read—Virgil, Plato, and

Hesoid, when I have time! But assuredly no modern books; least of all my friends', lest I should have either to flatter or offend. Still less will I have to say to young men proposing to become clergymen. I have distinctly told them their business is at present—to dig, not preach.

Let your young friend read his Fors. All that he needs of me is in that.

48.

ANNECY, SAVOY,
November 15th, 1882.

I have got your kind little note of the 11th yesterday, and am entirely glad to hear of your papers on the Duddon. I shall be very happy indeed if you find any pleasure in remembering our walk to the tarn.* I hope I know now better

* Goat's Water, under the Old Man of Coniston.

how to manage myself in all ways, and we may still have some pleasant talks, my health not failing me.

49.

TALLOIRE, SWITZERLAND,
November 20th, 1882.

MY DEAR MALLESON,—I am sincerely grieved that you begin to feel the effect of overwork; but as this is the first warning you have had, and as you are wise enough to obey it, I trust that the three months' rest will restore you all your usual powers on the conditions of using them with discretion, and not rising to write at two in the morning.

I am very thankful to find in my own case that a quiet spring of energy filters back into the old well-heads—if one does not bucket it out as fast as it comes in.

But my last illnesses seriously impaired

my walking powers, and I'm afraid if you came to Switzerland I should be very jealous of you.

Certainly it is not in this season a country for an invalid, and I believe you cannot be safer than by English firesides with no books to work at nor parishioners to visit.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

50.

January 22nd, 1883.

DEAR MALLESON,—I am heartily glad to hear that you are better, and that you are going to lead the Vicar of Wakefield's quiet life. I am not stronger myself, but think it right to keep hold of the Oxford Helm, as long as they care to trust it to me.

I've entirely given up reviewing, but if the Editor of the *Contemporary*

would send me Mr. Peek's Article, when set up, I might perhaps send a note or two on it, which the real reviewer might use or not at his pleasure. In the meantime it would greatly oblige me if the Editor could give me the reference to an old article of mine on Herbert Spencer, (or at least on a saying of his), which I cannot find where I thought it was in the *Nineteenth Century*, and suppose therefore to have been in the *Contemporary* before the *Nineteenth Century* Athena arose out of its cleft head.

The Article had a lot about Coniston in it, but I quite forget what else it was about. I think it must have been just before the separation. Kindest regards and congratulations on your convalescence from all here.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.

51.

BRANTWOOD, *February 6th*, 1883.

MY DEAR MALLESON,—I'm nearly beside myself with a sudden rush of work on my return from abroad, and resumption of Oxford duties, and I simply *cannot* yet think over the business of the letters, the rather that *I* certainly never would re-publish most of those clergymen's letters at all.

My own were a gift to you, and I am quite ready to print *them* if you like, and let you have half profits, the St. George's Guild having the other. But that could not be for some time yet.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

EPILOGUE BY MR. RUSKIN

EPILOGUE BY MR. RUSKIN

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, *June* 1880.

MY DEAR MALLESON,—I have glanced at the proofs you send; and *can* do no more than glance, even if it seemed to me desirable that I should do more,—which, after said glance, it does in no wise. Let me remind you of what it is absolutely necessary that the readers of the book should clearly understand —that I wrote these Letters at your request, to be read and discussed at the meeting of a private society of clergymen. I declined then to be present at the discussion, and I decline still. You afterwards asked leave to print the

Letters, to which I replied that they were yours, for whatever use you saw good to make of them: afterwards your plans expanded, while my own notion remained precisely what it had been—that the discussion should have been private, and kept within the limits of the society, and that its conclusions, if any, should have been announced in a few pages of clear print, for the parishioners' exclusive reading.

I am, of course, flattered by the wider course you have obtained for the Letters, but am not in the slightest degree interested by the debate upon them, nor by any religious debates whatever, undertaken without serious conviction that there is a jot wrong in matters as they are, or serious resolution to make them a tittle better. Which, so far as I can read the minds of your correspondents,

appears to me the substantial state of them.

One thing I cannot pass without protest — the quantity of talk about the writer of the Letters. What I am, or am not, is of no moment whatever to the matters in hand. I observe with comfort, or at least with complacency, that on the strength of a couple of hours' talk, at a time when I was thinking chiefly of the weatherings of slate you were good enough to show me above Goat's Water, you would have ventured to baptize me in the little lake—as not a goat, but a sheep. The best I can be sure of, myself, is that I am no wolf, and have never aspired to the dignity even of a Dog of the Lord.

You told me, if I remember rightly, that one of the members of the original meeting denounced me as an

arch-heretic * — meaning, doubtless, an arch-pagan ; for a heretic, or sect-maker, is of all terms of reproach the last that can be used of me. And I think he should have been answered that it was precisely as an arch-pagan that I ventured to request a more intelligible and more unanimous account of the Christian Gospel from its preachers.

If anything in the Letters offended those of you who hold me a brother, surely it had been best to tell me between ourselves, or to tell it to the Church, or to let me be Anathema Maranatha in peace,—in any case, I must at present so abide, correcting only the mistakes about myself which have led to graver ones about the things I wanted to speak of.†

* Only a heretic !—ED.

† I may perhaps be pardoned for vindicating at least my arithmetic, which, with Bishop Colenso, I rather pride myself upon. One of your correspondents

The most singular one, perhaps, in all the Letters is that of Mr. ——, that I do not attach enough weight to

greatly doubts my having heard five thousand assertors of evangelical principles (Catholic-absolvent or Protestant-detergent are virtually the same). I am now sixty years old, and for forty-five of them was in church at least once on the Sunday,—say once a month also in afternoons,—and you have above three thousand church services. When I am abroad I am often in half-a-dozen churches in the course of a single day, and never lose a chance of listening to anything that is going on. Add the conversations pursued, not unearnestly, with every sort of reverend person I can get to talk to me—from the Bishop of Strasburg (as good a specimen of a town bishop as I have known), with whom I was studying ecstatic paintings in the year 1850—down to the simplest travelling tinker inclined Gospelwards, whom I perceive to be sincere, and your correspondent will perceive that my rapid numerical expression must be far beneath the truth. He subjoins his more rational doubt of my acquaintance with many town missionaries; to which I can only answer, that as I do not live in town, nor set up for a missionary myself, my spiritual advantages have certainly not been great in that direction. I simply assert that of the few I have known,—beginning with Mr. Spurgeon, under whom I sat with much edification for a year or two,—I have not known any such teaching as I speak of.

antiquity. My reply to it is partly written already, with reference to the wishes of some other of your correspondents to know more of my reasons for finding fault with the English Liturgy.

If people are taught to use the Liturgy rightly and reverently, it will bring them all good; and for some thirty years of my life I used to read it always through to my servant and myself, if we had no Protestant church to go to, in Alpine or Italian villages. One can always tacitly pray of it what one wants, and let the rest pass. But, as I have grown older, and watched the decline in the Christian faith of all nations, I have got more and more suspicious of the effect of this particular form of words on the truthfulness of the English mind (now fast becoming a salt which has lost his

savour, and is fit only to be trodden under foot of men). And during the last ten years, in which my position at Oxford has compelled me to examine what authority there was for the code of prayer, of which the University is now so ashamed that it no more dares compel its youths so much as to hear, much less to utter it, I got necessarily into the habit of always looking to the original forms of the prayers of the fully developed Christian Church. Nor did I think it a mere chance which placed in my own possession a manuscript of the perfect Church service of the thirteenth century,* written by the monks of the Sainte Chapelle for St. Louis; together with one of the same date, written in England, probably for the Diocese of Lincoln; adding some of the Collects, in which it corresponds with St. Louis's,

* See Appendix.

and the Latin hymns so much beloved by Dante, with the appointed music for them.

And my wonder has been greater every hour, since I examined closely the text of these and other early books, that in any state of declining, or captive, energy, the Church of England should have contented itself with a service which cast out, from beginning to end, all these intensely spiritual and passionate utterances of chanted prayer (the whole body, that is to say, of the authentic *Christian* Psalms), and in adopting what it timidly preserved of the Collects, mangled or blunted them down to the exact degree which would make them either unintelligible or inoffensive — so vague that everybody might use them, or so pointless that nobody could be offended by them. For a special instance: The prayer for

"our bishops and curates, and all congregations committed to their charge," is, in the Lincoln Service-book, "for our bishop, and all congregations committed to *his* charge." The change from singular to plural seems a slight one. But it suffices to take the eyes of the people off their own bishop into infinite space; to change a prayer which was intended to be uttered in personal anxiety and affection, into one for the general good of the Church, of which nobody could judge, and for which nobody would particularly care; and, finally, to change a prayer to which the answer, if given, would be visible, into one of which nobody could tell whether it were answered or not.

In the Collects, the change, though verbally slight, is thus tremendous in issue. But in the Litany—word and thought go all wild together. The

first prayer of the Litany in the Lincoln Service-book is for the Pope and all ranks beneath him, implying a very noteworthy piece of theology—that the Pope might err in religious matters, and that the prayer of the humblest servant of God would be useful to him:—"Ut Dompnum Apostolicum, et omnes gradus ecclesie in sancta religione conservare digneris." Meaning that whatever errors particular persons might, and must, fall into, they prayed God to keep the Pope right, and the collective testimony and conduct of the ranks below him. Then follows the prayer for their own bishop and *his* flock—then for the king and the princes (chief lords), that they (not all nations) might be kept in concord—and then for *our* bishops and abbots,—the Church of England proper; every one of these petitions being direct,

limited, and personally heartfelt;—and then this lovely one for themselves:—

"Ut obsequium servitutis nostre rationabile facias."—"That thou wouldst make the obedience of our service reasonable" ("which is your reasonable service").*

This glorious prayer is, I believe, accurately an "early English" one. It is not in the St. Louis Litany, nor in a later elaborate French fourteenth century one; but I find it softened in an Italian MS. of the fifteenth century into "ut nosmet ipsos in tuo sancto servitio confortare et conservare digneris,"—"that thou wouldst deign to keep and comfort us ourselves in thy sacred service" (the comfort, observe, being here asked for whether reasonable or not!); and in the best and

* See in the Appendix for more of these beautiful prayers.—ED.

fullest French service-book I have, printed at Rouen in 1520, it becomes, "ut congregationes omnium sanctorum in tuo sancto servitio conservare digneris;" while victory as well as concord is asked for the king and the princes,—thus leading the way to that for our own Queen's victory over all her enemies, a prayer which might now be advisedly altered into one that she—and in her, the monarchy of England—might find more fidelity in their friends.

I give one more example of the corruption of our Prayer-Book, with reference to the objections taken by some of your correspondents to the distinction implied in my Letters between the Persons of the Father and the Christ.

The "Memoria de Sancta Trinitate," in the St. Louis service-book, runs thus:

"Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui

dedisti famulis tuis in confessione vere fidei eterne Trinitatis gloriam agnoscere, et in potentia majestatis adorare unitatem, quesumus ut ejus fidei firmitate ab omnibus semper muniemur adversis. Qui vivis et regnas Deus, per omnia secula seculorum. Amen."

"Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given to Thy servants, in confession of true faith to recognize the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of Majesty to pray to the Unity; we ask that by the firmness of that faith we may be always defended from all adverse things, who livest and reignest God through all ages. Amen."

Turning to our Collect, we find we have first slipped in the word "us" before "Thy servants," and by that little insertion have slipped in the squire and his jockey, and the public-house landlord—and any one else who may

chance to have been coaxed, swept, or threatened into church on Trinity Sunday, and required the entire company of them to profess themselves servants of God, and believers in the mystery of the Trinity. And we think we have done God a service!

"Grace." Not a word about grace in the original. You don't believe by having grace, but by having wit.

"To acknowledge." "Agnosco" is to recognize, not to acknowledge. To *see* that there are three lights in a chandelier is a great deal more than to acknowledge that they are there.

"To worship." "Adorare" is to pray to, not to worship. You may worship a mere magistrate; but you *pray* to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The last sentence in the English is too horribly mutilated to be dealt with in any patience. The meaning of the

great old collect is that by the shield of that faith we may quench all the fiery darts of the devil. The English prayer means, if it means anything, "Please keep us in our faith without our taking any trouble; and, besides, please don't let us lose our money, nor catch cold."

"Who livest and reignest." Right; but how many of any extant or instant congregations understand what the two words mean? That God is a living God, not a dead Law; and that He is a reigning God, putting wrong things to rights, and that, sooner or later, with a strong hand and a rod of iron; and not at all with a soft sponge and warm water, washing everybody as clean as a baby every Sunday morning, whatever dirty work they may have been about all the week.

On which latter supposition your

modern Liturgy, in so far as it has supplemented instead of corrected the old one, has entirely modelled itself,—producing in its first address to the congregation before the Almighty precisely the faultfullest and foolishest piece of English language that I know in the whole compass of English or American literature. In the seventeen lines of it (as printed in my old-fashioned, large-print prayer-book), there are seven times over two words for one idea.

1. Acknowledge and confess.
2. Sins and wickedness.
3. Dissemble nor cloke.
4. Goodness and mercy.
5. Assemble and meet.
6. Requisite and necessary.
7. Pray and beseech.

There is, indeed, a shade of difference in some of these ideas for a good scholar,

none for a general congregation;* and what difference they can guess at merely muddles their heads: to acknowledge sin is indeed different from confessing it, but it cannot be done at a minute's notice; and goodness is a different thing from mercy, but it is by no means God's infinite goodness that forgives our badness, but that judges it.

"The faultfullest," I said, "and the foolishest." After using fourteen words

* The only explanation ever offered for this exuberant wordiness is that if worshippers did not understand one term they would the other, and in some cases, in the Exhortation and elsewhere, one word is of Latin and the other of Saxon derivation.* But this is surely a very feeble excuse for bad composition. Of a very different kind is that beautiful climax which is reached in the three admirably chosen pairs of words in the Prayer for the Parliament, "peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety."—EDITOR.

* The repetition of synonymous terms is of very frequent occurrence in sixteenth century writing, as "for ever and aye," "Time and the hour run through the roughest day" (Macbeth, i. 3).

where seven would have done, what is it that the whole speech gets said with its much speaking? This Morning Service of all England begins with the assertion that the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to confess our sins before God. *Does* it so? Have your congregations ever been referred to those sundry places? Or do they take the assertion on trust, or remain under the impression that, unless with the advantage of their own candour, God must remain ill-informed on the subject of their sins?

"That we should not dissemble nor cloke them." *Can* we then? Are these grown-up congregations of the enlightened English Church in the nineteenth century still so young in their nurseries that the "Thou, God, seest me" is still not believed by them if they get under the bed?

Let us look up the sundry moving passages referred to.

(I suppose myself a simple lamb of the flock, and only able to use my English Bible.)

I find in my concordance (confess and confession together) forty-two occurrences of the word. Sixteen of these, including John's confession that he was not the Christ, and the confession of the faithful fathers that they were pilgrims on the earth, do indeed move us strongly to confess Christ before men. Have you ever taught your congregations what that confession means? They are ready enough to confess Him in church, that is to say, in their own private synagogue. Will they in Parliament? Will they in a ball-room? Will they in a shop? Sixteen of the texts are to enforce their doing *that*.

The next most important one (1 Tim.

vi. 13) refers to Christ's own good confession, which I suppose was not of His sins, but of His obedience. How many of your congregations can make any such kind of confession, or wish to make it?

The eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth (1 Kings viii. 33, 2 Chron. vi. 26, Heb. xiii. 15) speak of confessing thankfully that God is God (and not a putrid plasma nor a theory of development), and the twenty-first (Job xl. 14) speaks of God's own confession, that no doubt we are the people, and that wisdom shall die with us, and on what conditions He will make it.

There remain twenty-one texts which do speak of the confession of our sins—very moving ones indeed—and Heaven grant that some day the British public may be moved by them.

1. The first is Lev. v. 5, "He shall

confess that he hath sinned *in that thing.*" And if you can get any soul of your congregation to say he has sinned in *any*thing, he may do it in two words for one if he likes, and it will yet be good liturgy.

2. The second is indeed general—Lev. xvi. 21: the command that the whole nation should afflict its soul on the great day of atonement once a year. The Church of England, I believe, enjoins no such unpleasant ceremony. Her festivals are passed by her people often indeed in the extinction of their souls, but by no means in their intentional affliction.

3. The third, fourth, and fifth (Lev. xxvi. 40, Numb. v. 7, Nehem. i. 6) refer all to national humiliation for definite idolatry, accompanied with an entire abandonment of that idolatry, and of idolatrous persons. How soon *that* form of confession is likely to find a

place in the English congregations the defences of their main idol, mammon, in the vilest and cruellest shape of it —usury—with which this book has been defiled, show very sufficiently.

6. The sixth is Psalm xxxii. 5—virtually the whole of that psalm, which does, indeed, entirely refer to the greater confession, once for all opening the heart to God, which can be by no means done fifty-two times a year, and which, once done, puts men into a state in which they will never again say there is no health in them; nor that their hearts are desperately wicked; but will obey for ever the instantly following order, "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, and shout for joy, all ye that are true of heart."

7. The seventh is the one confession in which I can myself share:—"After the way which they call heresy,

so worship I the Lord God of my fathers."

8. The eighth, James v. 16, tells us to confess our faults—not to God, but "one to another"—a practice not favoured by English catechumens—(by the way, what *do* you all mean by "auricular" confession — confession that can be heard? and is the Protestant pleasanter form one that can't be?)

9. The ninth is that passage of St. John (i. 9), the favourite evangelical text, which is read and preached by thousands of false preachers every day, without once going on to read its great companion, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things; but if our heart condemn us *not*, then have we confidence toward God." Make your people understand the second text, and they will understand the first. At

present you leave them understanding neither.

And the entire body of the remaining texts is summed in Joshua vii. 19 and Ezra x. 11, in which, whether it be Achan, with his Babylonish garment, or the people of Israel, with their Babylonish lusts, the meaning of confession is simply what it is to every brave boy, girl, man, and woman, who knows the meaning of the word "honour" before God or man—namely, to say what they have done wrong, and to take the punishment of it (not to get it blanched over by any means), and to do it no more—which is so far from being a tone of mind generally enforced either by the English, or any other extant Liturgy, that, though all my maids are exceedingly pious, and insist on the privilege of going to church as a quite inviolable one, I think it a scarcely to be hoped

for crown and consummation of virtue in them that they should tell me when they have broken a plate; and I should expect to be met only with looks of indignation and astonishment if I ventured to ask one of them how she had spent her Sunday afternoon.

"Without courage," said Sir Walter Scott, "there is no truth; and without truth there is no virtue." The sentence would have been itself more true if Sir Walter had written "candour" for "truth," for it is possible to be true in insolence, or true in cruelty. But in looking back from the ridges of the Hill Difficulty in my own past life, and in all the vision that has been given me of the wanderings in the ways of others—this, of all principles, has become to me surest—that the first virtue to be required of man is frankness of heart and lip: and I believe that every

youth of sense and honour, putting himself to faithful question, would feel that he had the devil for confessor, if he had not his father or his friend.

That a clergyman should ever be so truly the friend of his parishioners as to deserve their confidence from childhood upwards, may be flouted as a sentimental ideal; but he is assuredly only their enemy in showing his Lutheran detestation of the sale of indulgences by broadcasting these gratis from his pulpit.

The inconvenience and unpleasantness of a catechism concerning itself with the personal practice as well as the general theory of duty, are indeed perfectly conceivable by me; yet I am not convinced that such manner of catechism would therefore be less medicinal; and during the past ten years it has often been matter of amazed thought with me, while our President

at Corpus read prayers to the chapel benches, what might by this time have been the effect on the learning as well as the creed of the University, if, forty years ago, our stern old Dean Gaisford, of the House of Christ, instead of sending us to chapel as to the house of correction, when we missed a lecture, had inquired, before he allowed us to come to chapel at all, whether we were gamblers, harlot-mongers, or in concealed and selfish debt.

I observe with extreme surprise in the preceding letters the unconsciousness of some of your correspondents, that there ever was such a thing as discipline in the Christian Church. Indeed, the last wholesome instance of it I can remember was when my own great-great uncle Maitland lifted Lady —— from his altar rails, and led her back to her seat before the

congregation, when she offered to take the Sacrament, being at enmity with her son.* But I believe a few hours honestly spent by any clergyman on his Church history would show him that the Church's confidence in her prayer has been always exactly proportionate to the strictness of her discipline; that her present fright at being caught praying by a chemist or an electrician, results mainly from her having allowed her twos and threes gathered in the name of Christ to become sixes and sevens gathered in the

* In some of the country districts of Scotland the right of the Church to interfere with the lives of private individuals is still exercised. Only two years ago, a wealthy gentleman farmer was rebuked by the "Kirk Session" of the Dissenting Church to which he belonged, for infidelity to his wife.

At the Scottish half-yearly Communion the ceremony of "fencing the tables" used to be observed; that is, turning away all those whose lives were supposed to have made them unfit to receive the Sacrament.

name of Belial; and that therefore her now needfullest duty is to explain to her stammering votaries, extremely doubtful as they are of the effect of their supplications either on politics or the weather, that although Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, he had them better under command; and that while the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, the formal and lukewarm one of an iniquitous man availeth—much the other way.

Such an instruction, coupled with due explanation of the nature of righteousness and iniquity, directed mainly to those who have the power of both in their own hands, being makers of law, and holders of property, would, without any further debate, bring about a very singular change in the position and respectability of English clergymen.

How far they may at present be considered as merely the Squire's left hand, bound to know nothing of what he is doing with his right, it is for their own consciences to determine.

For instance, a friend wrote to me the other day, "Will you not come here? You will see a noble duke destroying a village as old as the Conquest, and driving out dozens of families whose names are in Domesday Book, because, owing to the neglect of his ancestors and rackrenting for a hundred years, the place has fallen out of repair, and the people are poor, and may become paupers. A local paper ventured to tell the truth. The duke's agent called on the editor, and threatened him with destruction if he did not hold his tongue." The noble duke, doubtless, has proper Protestant horror of auricular confession. But suppose, instead of

the local editor, the local parson had ventured to tell the truth from his pulpit, and even to intimate to his Grace that he might no longer receive the Body and Blood of the Lord at the altar of that parish. The parson would scarcely — in these days — have been therefore made bonfire of, and had a pretty martyr's memorial by Mr. Scott's pupils; but he would have lighted a goodly light, nevertheless, in this England of ours, whose pettifogging piety has now neither the courage to deny a duke's grace in its church, nor to declare Christ's in its Parliament.

Lastly. Several of your contributors, I observe, have rashly dipped their feet in the brim of the water of that raging question of Usury; and I cannot but express my extreme regret that you should yourself have yielded to the temptation of expressing opinions which

you have had no leisure either to found or to test. My assertion, however, that the rich lived mainly by robbing the poor, referred not to Usury, but to Rent; and the facts respecting both these methods of extortion are perfectly and indubitably ascertainable by any person who himself wishes to ascertain them, and is able to take the necessary time and pains. I see no sign, throughout the whole of these letters, of any wish whatever, on the part of one of their writers, to ascertain the facts, but only to defend practices which they hold to be convenient in the world, and are afraid to blame in their congregations. Of the presumption with which several of the writers utter their notions on the subject, I do not think it would be right to speak farther, in an epilogue to which there is no reply, in the terms which otherwise

would have been deserved. In their bearing on other topics, let me earnestly thank you (so far as my own feelings may be permitted voice in the matter) for the attention with which you have examined, and the courage with which you have ratified, or at least endured, letters which could not but bear at first the aspect of being written in a hostile—sometimes even in a mocking spirit. That aspect is untrue, nor am I answerable for it: the things of which I had to speak could not be shortly described but in terms which might sound satirical; for all error, if frankly shown, is precisely most ridiculous when it is most dangerous, and I have written no word which is not chosen as the exactest for its occasion, whether it move sigh or smile. In my earlier days I wrote much with the desire to please, and the hope of influencing the reader. As I grow

older and older, I recognize the truth of the Preacher's saying, "Desire shall fail, and the mourners go about the streets;" and I content myself with saying, to whoso it may concern, that the thing is verily thus, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. No man more than I has ever loved the places where God's honour dwells, or yielded truer allegiance to the teaching of His evident servants. No man at this time grieves more for the danger of the Church which supposes him her enemy, while she whispers procrastinating *pax vobiscum* in answer to the spurious kiss of those who would fain toll curfew over the last fires of English faith, and watch the sparrow find nest where she may lay her young, around the altars of the Lord.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

MR. RUSKIN having kindly entrusted me with his valuable English thirteenth century MS. service book, referred to p. 295, I have thought it would be interesting to the readers of this volume to see a little more in detail some of the origins of our Litany and Collects. I think it will be owned that our Reformers failed to mend some of them in the translation. I am quite unversed in the reading of ancient MSS., but I hope the following, with the translation, will not be found incorrect. I have preserved neither the contractions nor the responses repeated after each petition, and have changed the mediæval "e" into "æ," as "terre" into "terræ."—EDITOR.

Ut dompnum apostolicum et omnes gradus ecclesiæ in sancta religione conservare digneris.

Te rogamus, audi nos, Domine.

Ut episcopum nostrum et gregem sibi commissum conservare digneris.

Te rogamus. . . .

Ut regi nostro et principibus nostris pacem et veram concordiam atque victoriam, donare digneris.

Ut episcopos et abbates nostros et congregationes illis commissas in sancta religione conservare digneris.

Ut congregationes omnium sanctorum in tuo sancto servitio conservare digneris.

Ut cunctum populum Christianum precioso sanguine tuo conservare digneris.

Ut omnibus benefactoribus nostris sempiterna bona retribuas.

Ut animas nostras et parentum nostrorum ab eterna dampnatione eripias.

Ut mentes nostras ad celestia desideria erigas.

Ut obsequium servitutis nostræ rationabile facias.

Ut locum istum et omnes habitantes in eo visitare et consolari digneris.

Ut fructus terræ dare et conservare digneris.

Ut inimicos sanctæ Dei ecclesiæ comprimere digneris.

Ut oculos misericordiæ tuæ super nos reducere digneris.

Ut miserias pauperum et captivorum intueri et relevare digneris.

Ut omnibus fidelibus defunctis requiem eternam dones.

Ut nos exaudire digneris.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Parce nobis Domine.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Exaudi nos.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.

Deus cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere suscipe deprecationem nostram et quos delictorum cathena constringit misericordia tuæ pietatis absolvas, per Jesum Christum.

Ecclesiæ tuæ Domine, preces placatus admitte ut destructis adversitatibus universis secura tibi serviat libertate.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus qui facis mirabilia magna solus pretende super famulum tuum episcopum nostrum et super cunctas congregationes illi commissas spiritum gratiæ tuæ salutaris et ut in veritate tibi complaceant perpetuum eis rorem tuæ benedictionis infunde, per Jesum.

Deus in cujus manu corda sunt regum qui es humilium consolator et fidelium fortitudo et protector omnium in te sperantium, da regi nostro et

reginæ populoque Christiano, triumphum virtutis tuæ scienter excolere, ut per te semper reparentur ad veniam.

Pretende Domine et famulis et famulabus tuis dexteram celestis auxilii ut te toto corde propinquant atque digne postulationes assequantur.

Deus a quo sancta desideria recta consilia et justa sunt opera, da servis tuis illam quam mundus dare non potest pacem ut et corda nostra mandatis tuis et hostium ublata formidine tempora sint tua protectione tranquilla.

Ure igne sancti spiritus renes nostros et cor nostrum, Domine, ut tibi corde casto serviamus et mundo corpore placeamus.

Translation

That it may please Thee to keep the apostolic lord (*i.e.* the Pope) and all ranks of the Church in Thy holy religion.

O Lord, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That it may please Thee to keep our bishop, and the flock committed to him.

That it may please Thee to give to our king and our princes (or chief lords), peace, and true concord, and victory.

That it may please Thee to keep our bishops and abbots, and the congregations committed to them, in holy religion.

That it may please Thee to keep the congregations of all saints in Thy holy service.

That it may please Thee to keep the whole Christian people with Thy precious blood.

That it may please Thee to requite all our benefactors with everlasting blessings.

That it may please Thee to preserve our souls and the souls of our kindred from eternal damnation.

That it may please Thee that Thou wouldest lift up our hearts to heavenly desires.

That it may please Thee to make the obedience of our service reasonable.

That it may please Thee to visit and to comfort this place, and all who dwell in it.

That it may please Thee to give and preserve the fruits of the earth.

That it may please Thee to restrain the enemies of the Holy Church of God.

That it may please Thee to look upon us with eyes of mercy.

That it may please Thee to behold and relieve the miseries of the poor and the prisoners.

That it may please Thee to give eternal peace to all the faithful departed.

That it may please Thee to hear us.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world.

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world.

Hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

O God, whose property it is always to pity and to spare, receive our supplications, and by the mercy of Thy fatherly love, loose those whom the chain of their sins keeps bound, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Lord, receive with indulgence the prayers of Thy Church, that all adversities being overcome, it may serve Thee in freedom without fear.

Almighty, Eternal God, who alone doest great wonders, grant to Thy servant our bishop, and to all the congregations committed to him, the healthful spirit of Thy grace; and that they may please Thee in truth, pour out upon them the perpetual dew of Thy blessing.

O God, in whose hand are the hearts of kings,

who art the consoler of the meek and the strength of the faithful, and the protector of all that trust in Thee, give to our king and queen and to the Christian people wisely to manifest the glory of Thy power, that by Thee they may ever be restored to forgiveness.

Extend, O Lord, over Thy servants and handmaidens, the right hand of Thy heavenly aid, that they may draw near unto Thee with all their heart, and worthily obtain their petitions.

Kindle with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit our reins and our hearts, O Lord, that we may serve Thee with a clean heart, and please Thee with a pure body.

O God, from whom are all holy desires, right counsels, and just works, give unto Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give, that both our hearts (may obey) Thy commands, and the fear of the enemy being taken away, we may have quiet times by Thy protection.

Upon one of the blank leaves of this MS. are some interesting remarks upon its probable date, furnished by Mr. Ruskin himself. "The style, and pieces of inner evidence in all this book speak it clearly of the first half of the thirteenth century. The architecture is all

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round arched—the roofs of Norman simplicity —unpinnacled—the severe and simple forms of letter are essentially Norman, and the leaf and ball terminations of the spiral of the extremities, exactly intermediate between the Norman and Gothic types. The ivy and geranium leaves begin to show themselves long before the end of the thirteenth century, and there is not a trace of them in this book." This evidence of early date, however, is qualified by the further statement, "old styles sometimes hold on long in provincial MSS."

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, *April 14th*, 1881.

THE END

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